







**FLEET STREET**









## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

WE have to express our grateful thanks for permission to reproduce the passages quoted in this Anthology both from the authors and from the editors of the papers in which the excerpts originally appeared.

Mrs. A. B. Walkley has been good enough to allow us to reprint two articles by her late husband; Dr. Philip Gosse has given us permission to reprint a characteristic contribution by his late father. We also wish to thank the literary executors of the late Lord Northcliffe for permission to reprint his sketch of Sir Douglas Haig.

Certain of the articles that we have quoted have appeared in collected volumes of essays as well as in newspapers, and we have therefore to express our thanks also to Messrs. Jonathan Cape, Ltd., for H. W. Massingham's 'Mr. Chesterton's Black Magic' contained in the volume *H. W. M.*; for 'At the Pit Head' by H. W. Tomlinson contained in the volume *Old Junk*; and for 'The Tosh Horse' by Rebecca West contained in *The Strange Necessity*; to Messrs. Cassell, Ltd., for 'What is Success' by the Very Rev. Dean Inge in the volume *Assessments and Anticipations*; to Messrs. William Heinemann for 'Grock' by A. B. Walkley from *Still More Prejudice*, and for 'Epitaph' from Maurice Baring's *Collected Poems*; to Messrs. Methuen for 'The Battle of Footerloo' by Robert Lynd from *The Blue Lion*, 'Hail and Farewell' by Wyndham Lewis from *Welcome to All This*; to Messrs. James Nisbet for 'The Cecilians' by Herbert Sidebotham from *Pillars of the State*; to the Richards Press for 'Tom Richardson' by Neville Cardus

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This collection has been made as representative as possible, but we realise that there are several regrettable omissions which, for one reason or another, have been inevitable.

To this Introduction I have to add one thing. My friend Cobbett has made over half the royalties that may be derived from the sales of this book to the Benevolent Fund of the Institute of Journalists.

SIDNEY DARK.

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# INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

AT the dinners *chez Pagani* of the Omar Khayyam Club, of which I am in more senses than one an ancient member, it is customary for the president, if a newly-elected Omarian is present, to call on him to 'justify himself.' It is part of the ritual of the evening. The victim's dinner completely spoiled, he stands and delivers his brief oration, sinks back in his chair, and drowns care in floods of Chianti. I am in similar case. Though I am not what Matthew Arnold calls a Citizen of the Republic of Letters, I have yet dared to make an appearance as editor (or co-editor) of a literary production. The need is patent for me to use the opportunity which this Introduction offers of making the attempt to justify myself, and of defining my object in the begetting of this Anthology.

I will take the last of these propositions first. My object is to do honour to Journalism and with the collaboration of Mr. Sidney Dark to give a helping hand to the Benevolent Fund of the Institute of Journalists, which has been of almost inestimable benefit to the profession in these times of financial embarrassment, aggravated as it has been by certain amalgamations and changes in newspaper proprietorship.

The first, on the other hand, calls for a more personal and more lengthy explanation. Though not myself a journalist, I have contributed a few hundred articles and critical comments to musical periodicals and dictionaries, music being an art to which I have devoted a large slice of my life, but such effusions are not journalism as I understand it. They are written in the restful seclusion of my own study, not in feverish haste



amid the roar of that 'loom of time,' the printing press, of which Mr. H. W. Nevinson writes in his article, 'Fleet Street.' Nor have I the facility of the late Alfred Austin; of which E. F. Benson gives an account in his recently-published book of reminiscences *As We Were*. It runs as follows:

'He told us how he had once been an occasional leader writer to the *Standard*. Forty-five minutes was the time it took him to write one of these leaders on whatever subject was required. Mr. Bryce was once staying with him and very rashly expressed his firm conviction that nobody could write a leading article in forty-five minutes. Oddly enough there arrived at this precise moment a telegram for Mr. Austin in which the editor of the *Standard* requested him to supply him with a leader on some particular subject without delay. He went at once into his study and Mr. Bryce, having noted the time, sat in the garden to wait for him. As soon as Mr. Austin had finished his article he went out to show it to Mr. Bryce. There it was complete. Mr. Bryce looked at his watch. "To be quite exact, forty-three minutes," he said. "I could not have believed it."'

The most characteristic journalism is of this unlaboured, extemporaneous kind. The writers are the Schuberts of literature. It will be remembered how Franz Schubert, waiting in an ante-room for a friend, killed time by jotting down a few notes on any old scrap of paper that was handy, and carelessly left what was haply an immortal song lying forgotten in some odd corner of the room. Thus the journalist who, catching inspiration as it flies, hastily gives it form and sets it before readers to whom it affords momentary pleasure. For such writing, chiefly anonymous, which finds its reflection in the pages of this Anthology, I am lost in admiration.

My own claim to consideration is, indeed, a modest one. I am a reader, nothing more, but I humbly submit that there are readers and readers—*soi-disant* readers whose one aim is to avoid the trouble of thinking—some who make what is but

a fatuous pretence of reading certain works, so as to be in the swim, others who gallop at top speed through a book, and having finished it, or pretended to finish it, remain ignorant of its real content. Once convinced that a book is of some value, though not necessarily of the highest grade, the honest reader will bear in mind the old Latin tag—*Lege totum si vis scire totum*—and pay to the author the tribute of careful study, letting none of his good things pass him by.

Such a one, by your leave, am I. I have acquired by constant contact with books at least a measure of fitness for the task I have undertaken, and may possibly have been helpful in the matter of finance. Mr. Dark, on his side, has supplied the press-craft which I do not possess. While questions of form and technique are within the province of Mr. Dark, my own conception of good journalism is that being intended for the eye of the workaday reader, not for the high-brow, it should be distinguished before all by sweet readableness, though not debarred from a frequent excursus into regions of culture. One of Mr. Punch's learned clerks writes, in obvious allusion to a leading journal:

'Even its best sporting pages  
Are penned by scholars, wits and sages,'

lines which recall a well-worn proverb, for besides being written in jest, they happen to be literally true.

It seemed desirable to include verse as well as prose, and Mr. J. C. Squire, an admitted expert, has helped us to make the selection.

Some of the pieces we have anthologised may (for all we know) be remembered and quoted a hundred years hence: some may die with the memory of the events which gave rise to them. But they were all spontaneously generated by the touch of actual happenings: all, or almost all, appeared in newspapers, and it is probable that most of them would never have seen the light of day did newspapers not exist.

It is not uncommon for literary folk to join the chorus of those who praise the past at the expense of the present. To this view I am opposed. For me the world's journalism is less didactic and less prejudiced than in the Victorian days which I am old enough to remember. Still more important, it is more humorous. Of all the qualities necessary for the equipment of a journalist, a sense of humour is surely the most desirable. A platitude, perhaps, but one of a kind found in quite reputable company. I am told that in the Talmud, which needless to say is not one of my bedside books, this passage occurs: 'Paradise belongs to him who makes his companions laugh,' an aphorism in which there is more than one, nay more than twenty grains of truth.

It cannot be denied that the inferior side of journalism, the cheap, the sensational, the purely commercial, is still with us, but at least there are more writers of the nobler sort to stem the tide—a point which this Anthology may help to stress.

I have been asked, 'How is it that you, who have been in your time an industrialist, filling your hours of leisure with musical activities, can have found time to read anything more than the newspapers and a few detective stories?' I propose to give the substance of my reply as part of the Omarian *pièces justificatives* which I have set out to prepare. Passing over boyhood's days, I first began to read, in a vital sense of the word, when at the age of seventeen my father sent me to Caen, in Normandy, to learn French. My companions, students for the *baccalauréat*, advised me (as might be expected of Frenchmen) to frequent the chief library of the town in order to make acquaintance with the literature of their country. This I did for many hours daily, and had the good fortune to enjoy the companionship of a clever young journalist named Léon Poubelle, who took a friendly interest in me, recommended certain books, talked interestingly about them and made of me the youngest *rat de bibliothèque* in the town. I look back to

the hours I spent in his company, and in the company of those giants of literature the French *prosateurs*, as among the happiest of my existence. The tie of friendship extended to his brother Eugène, a lecturer at the University, who ultimately became Prefect of the Seine, and of all prefects known to the Paris municipality the most famous. For certain reasons his name to this day is a household word among the *bourgeoisie* of that city. Ten years later I was his guest for seven weeks at the prefecture of Grenoble, and am therefore not one of those who deny to Frenchmen the virtues of hospitality. His leisure being devoted to literary pursuits, and his memory phenomenal, he recited poetry by the hour to my infinite delight.

From Caen I went to Frankfort-on-the-Main to learn German, and there read Goethe, Schiller, Lessing and Heine with a clever, rather *schwärmerisch*, lady, who was the wife of the pastor in whose house I lodged. My comrades in this pension were English, and I cannot say that I talked as much German as I might have done. But I read diligently, and the taste for German literature thus acquired has survived to this day.

I returned home to face the struggle for life which awaits all who are not born with a silver spoon in their mouths, played many parts, and eventually fell upon my feet. I took up a patent in the exploitation of which I was so far successful that I was able at the age of sixty to retire and devote myself to more congenial work. This is my Foreword, for the personal nature of which I apologise.

I now arrive at a curious feature in my uneventful life's history, which I believe to be of psychological—or, as some would say, pathological interest. Inability to sleep is a common enough complaint, but it was an exaggerated form of it by which I was attacked in quite early days, fostered, I suppose, by youthful enthusiasm. Being engaged all day in

occupations of a more or less prosaic nature, I was not satisfied with taxing my brain more than was good for me by playing my violin late at night, but must needs read in bed afterwards to an extravagant extent. If a book interested me I was constitutionally unable to lay it down until it was finished. This meant frequent *nuits blanches* and established an insomniac habit which never left me. Of the drawbacks of such a habit I am painfully aware, but I can at least say that it has benefited me in the way which best accords with my heart's desire, it has enabled me to acquire by constant reading a little culture. I esteem myself fully compensated by literary joys for loss of sleep and loss of dreams. More than that, I have stolen from the night so many hours during the last seventy years that I have only to group them into years and add them to the eighty-four for which my baptismal certificate is a voucher, to proclaim myself a centenarian!

Once more back to Pagani's little room. I sink into my seat, hoping that I have in Omarian fashion 'justified myself' and earned the Chianti with which I drink 'Success to Journalism,' and confusion to those who disparage it in public and enjoy it in private.

As *Envoi* I quote the familiar invocation so often to be met with in the prefaces to old French books—*Va, petit livre*—Go little Book, take wings and fly with the thanks of myself and my colleague to all the writers who have so kindly contributed each a flower (*anthos*) to this literary nosegay—and give them the prospective thanks of the necessitous who will, I hope, in the fullness of time profit by their fraternal gesture.

I cannot do better than conclude with the following quotation from a *Times* leader, which appeared on May 4:

'The French Academy has for the first time in its long existence admitted to the highest literary honour in France a journalist who has never been anything but a journalist, who has never written a book or entered

Parliament, or composed poetry, but who has now been welcomed by the Director of that august assembly as "one of the best writers of the present generation." . . . Mr. Chaumeix has won the honour solely by his writings for a single newspaper. As its chief leader-writer he has contributed to the *Journal des Débats* for thirty years articles of exquisite quality on politics, philosophy and literature. Working under the pressure of daily publication, he has known what it is to finish on the stroke of time words which all the world will be at liberty to criticize on the morrow, and which for him—unlike the writers of mere books—there is no chance of revising or recasting. Horace's prudent precept *saepe stilum vertas* is not advice that he can follow. He must write quickly; and what he has written may never be retraced or recalled.'

W. W. COBBETT.

It would be superfluous for me to add more than a few lines. I am a journalist who is mightily proud of his craft. I have lived in the atmosphere of newspapers from my boyhood. I have, I think, occupied every position that a man can occupy on the staff of a newspaper, except that of racing tipster. I have an immense admiration for the character and capacity of the men of my craft, and few of the jobs that have come to me in the course of a long career have given me greater satisfaction than the compiling of this Anthology.

S. D.



## DESCRIPTIVES





## FOLLOWING THE PIPERS INTO GERMANY

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM

(who has been serving as a private soldier for the last eighteen months)

From *The Times*, Jan. 16th, 1919.

*Stephen Graham is essentially a mystic, a tall, powerfully-built man with the deep-set eyes that always suggest an acute realisation of things not seen. Before the war he travelled extensively in Russia, and was largely responsible for the common British conception of the Russian peasant as a mediaeval Christian. But perhaps Holy Russia was not quite so holy as it was painted. During the war Stephen Graham served as a guardsman in the ranks, and has told the story of the rough and efficient training that the guardsman received, and perhaps still receives at Caterham. He is the son of Anderson Graham, who was for years editor of Country Life.*

OUR way was rather uncertain, we waited each night for the name of the village of the morrow. Rumour would have sent us a score of ways, to Paris, to London, to Edinburgh, to Bonn, to Coblenz. We set off for Liège, but were turned away from it, were going to enter Germany by Aix-la-Chapelle and then by Stavelot and then by Beho. Nearing Huy we turned south-eastward, and, crossing the Ourthe at Hamoir, plunged into the Belgian Ardennes and came near to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

In all these wanderings the pipers were our companions, leading us and exploring the way. The various companies of the battalion took it in turns to be first in the march, to be

second, to be third, to follow up the rear, and when the company was in front, it heard the music in all its immediacy and splendour, but when it was behind it only heard it far away, like a child's voice sobbing or calling now and then.

Wonderful pipes! The men get tired and would fall out, but the pipes make a unity of them. Invisible tendons and muscles seemed to connect the legs of all files, and all move as one, mechanically, rhythmically, certainly. The strong are reduced to the step, the weak are braced up to it. All bear the strain and share the strain. So we go on, and the miracle is in the power of the music.

The first weeks of our journeying were punctuated by long halts, but the last ten days in the wettest of the weather were continuous marches. They made the most trying time of our experience. Boots wore out. Clothes got wet through and could not be dried. Rations were often delayed, and from continuous wearing of our heavy packs our shoulders were galled. But the curiosity to see Germany, the sense of an adventure, and the music kept our spirits up.

Thus on the morning of December 12, parading in the wet before dawn, all in our waterproof capes, we left the last forlorn village of the Belgian Ardennes and climbed out to the mysterious line which we all wished to see, that put friendly land behind and left only enemy country in front. One asked oneself what Germany would be like. But only an hour was needed to bring us to the Custom-houses and the sentry posts. We marched to attention, the rain streamed off our capes and trickled from our hats, but the tireless pipers played ahead, and by someone's inspiration the word went to the pipe major, play 'Over the Border,' so with a skirl that no weather could suppress we came up to the line to the strains of:

'March, march, all in good order,  
All the blue bonnets are over the Border.'

Then the pipers separated from the main body and took up their stand in a phalanx by the side of the road beside the familiar figure of our brigadier, and they played 'Highland Laddie' whilst we marched past at the salute. Thus we entered Germany with no formalities, and no enemy in view. We felt much cheered, though the time was cheerless, and we were full of curiosity to see the people we still called Huns, and men still talked of bayoneting and cutting throats. Presently we began to pass cottages, and we stared at them, but could see no people. Some of us shouted, 'Come out and show yourselves' and 'Come out of hiding,' forgetting that 'Jerry' was hardly likely to be awake yet.

When we began to see Germans they paid no attention to us whatever, but the woman at the well went on drawing water, and the man with straw in his arms continued his way to his barn without vouchsafing a glance. We saw women talking, with their backs to us, and they did not turn round to look at us as we passed. The children were as nonchalant towards the gay figures of our kilties as if they saw pipers every day of the week. It must be said that we were a little taken aback, a little mortified. But it rained and rained and the drums became silent, sodden and soaked with the water, and we splashed patiently and mechanically on through the mud and over the broken roads. Our fours became twos, became long threads of single file as we picked our way amidst great holes and ruts and gliding rivers of yellow ooze. When there would otherwise have been a view of Germany, trailing mist liquefying in the wind to bitter rain, swept hither and thither across our faces. On the sides of the roads was desolation, and occasionally still, as in Belgium, the sinister grey heaps of the entrails of cows, which told of the undisciplined German Army which had retired before us.

And with everyone wet to the bone we climbed the excruciatingly broken road over the hill from Amel to Moder-

scheide. In this wretched German village we were billeted, and the men made huge bonfires in the barnyards and stood round them to dry themselves. The Germans seemed to be rather afraid of us, and servile, but very poor. Tottering old men insisted on shaking hands with us. The girls of the place seemed to be carefully kept out of our way. Billets were wretched, and the men, still fire-eating, hunted for better ones, which when found they intended to take by storm. Those who had revolvers expected to have to use them. But we only discovered that the native inhabitants slept in worse places than we had, and that everyone was of the mildest disposition. Our blankets and reserve rations were in the waggons stuck at the bottom of the Amel hill. There was only one thing to do—to get dry and make the best of it.

Next day, with the sky still streaming, we made the longest continuous march, some 36 kilometres, and by that effort got well into Germany. The roads improved as we got farther on, but the tramp through the forest of Zitter was long, marshy, and melancholy. Our company was first after the pipers, and had the full benefit of the music all the way. And we wandered inward, inward, with our seeking and haunting Gaelic melodies into the depths of the hanging, silent wood. It was strange how aloof nature seemed to these melodies. In Scotland, or even in France, all the hills and the woods would have helped the music. But in this German land all were cold towards us, and those endless pine trees seemed to be holding hands with fingers spread before the eyes to show their shame and humiliation. There was a curious sense that the road on which we trod was not our road, and that earth and her fruits on either hand were hostile.

And how tired the men became, with half of them through the soles of their boots and with racking damp in their shoulders and backs from their rain-sodden packs. But we

listened still while voluminous waves of melody wandered homeless over German wastes and returned to us:

'I heard the pibroch sounding, sounding,  
O'er the wide meadows and lands from afar,'

or to the stirring strains of the 'March of the Battle of Harlaw,' or to the crooning, hoping, sobbing of 'Lord Lovat's Lament,' and so went on from hour to hour through the emptiness of Southern Germany. When we thought we had just about reached our camping-ground for the night, we came to a guide-post which showed it still to be seven kilometres on. But that was at the top of a long hill, and the road ran gently down through woods the whole way. The colonel sent a message to play 'Men of Portree.' The rain had stopped and an evening sky unveiled a more cheerful light. So with an easy inconsequent air we cast off care and tripped away down to the substantial and prosperous bit of Rhineland called Hellenthal, well on our way to Cologne.

## FOCH IN LONDON

*From The Times, July 19th, 1919*

THE desire to see great men is one of the redeeming features of the human race, and it was much to the fore a little after eleven last Friday morning. Marshal Foch was skilfully steered into Victoria when he was announced for Charing Cross, and consequently he arrived intact at the Carlton Hotel soon after eleven. But he had barely arrived when a crowd, of extraordinary respectability, surged against the eastern aspect of that noble and very British-looking pile of brick.

The middle classes, mostly of middle age, assembled, if so seemly a word can be used, in the Haymarket, were determined to see the Man who had led the Armies to victory. The

July sun shone down in mild and magnificent fashion on the morning mob, on the representatives of the clergy, professional and business classes which had hastened through breakfast—in best bib and tucker—to welcome the great Frenchman. It was a friendly crowd, tightly jammed and slightly perspiring. All sense of fitness was lost. Dainty ladies climbed dangerous railings with the agility of lizards; elderly clergy supported the stalwart forms of their elderly wives in positions that would have shocked the Victorian age. But there was only one thought in every mind: he is in there, and we must see him. So stolidly, clutchingly, they waited, and were prepared to wait the whole day until the Man appeared. He did not keep them long. In a very few minutes a window opened, and there came out on a little balcony a figure that was at once recognised and greeted in a fashion that must have astonished even Marshal Foch. Such passionate spontaneous cheering, springing, as it seemed, from the very souls of that massed multitude, can never before have ever greeted any foreigner. There is a moment when English reserve breaks down, really breaks down, and shows the nature within. In those few moments of passionate cheering Marshal Foch saw the English citizen and his wife as they really feel, saw them as they really are, as truly as he had seen their sons in France.

But what manner of man was this great commander, to the outward eye of the common British citizen? Though he was in uniform, he did not look 'every inch a soldier' at all. He looked like a rather nervous professor being acclaimed by his pupils; he looked as if he did not understand all this fuss; he looked tired, as doubtless he was, though he certainly did not look bored. He had not at all the appearance of a conquering hero. He gazed almost awkwardly at the crowd, as though he deprecated any praise for the solution of a mathematical problem. After two or three minutes the abstracted figure withdrew and was no more seen.

Slowly the crowd of respectable citizens dissolved into its elements and reckoned up torn garments and the satisfied desire to gaze upon the man who is destined to be regarded as one of the very great men of history. The crowd had looked upon the third of the three great Latin commanders: Caius Cæsar, Napoleon, Foch. They perhaps hardly realised that the third had turned the great Art of Arms into almost an applied exact Science while taking up into the Apparatus of Arms the will-power to conquer and the brain-power to foresee which were the main weapons of Cæsar and Napoleon. They perhaps also hardly realised, as they gazed upon that slight, tired, meditative figure, that they were looking upon a man who had arrested the apparent deflection of the course of world-history which German predominance had portended, and had given Christian civilisation one more chance.

## THE R 101

From *The Times*, October 6th, 1930

*This brilliant 'descriptive' was written by the Paris correspondent of The Times under the greatest possible difficulties.*

## THE SHIP'S SKELETON

I FOUND the wreck of R 101 near the village of Allone, a few miles south of Beauvais. As I approached the scene of the accident through the Bois Seck I caught sight of what looked at first like the half-built roof of a railway station standing up on the horizon beyond the trees. This was the framework of the unhappy airship. Getting nearer still, a delicate network of girders could be made out against the sky. It was one of the vertical fins of the ship. All the fabric had disappeared, and as one began to realise the immense scale of the structure,



which from a distance of a quarter of a mile already towered over the surrounding trees, it was difficult to believe that these were the remains of an aircraft fallen by accident into this windswept landscape, and not the framework of some gigantic building intended to stand permanently in this place.

With a near view of the wreck the impression of an orderly framework set out on the ground gave way to one of tragic chaos. The tail of the airship alone retained recognisable shape, its structure not having been very greatly damaged. It lay at the foot of the slope resting on the lower vertical rudder, which had been torn from its fastenings. The pointed tail-piece, with the framework of an observer's cockpit built into the end of it, towered sixty feet above the ground. From the framework of this part of the ship rags and strips of fabric hung fluttering in the wind. The two elevator planes were still almost covered with fabric.

Moving forward from the tail, the main girders of the airship lay parallel along the ground or hung high in the air from the distorted frames. At first the structure rose into the air for something like two-thirds of its original height, but towards the centre of the ship it sank lower and dissolved into a shapeless mass. Here in the centre section the fire was fiercest; here, also, the ship must have broken her back when she struck the ground. The stern engine stood upright on the centre line of the ship. The central gangway and its railings could still be seen. All the gas-bags and the outer envelope had vanished, but through and over the distorted framework wire stays and gas-bag nettings made a fine and elaborate tracery, as though an army of gigantic spiders had already covered the useless skeleton of R 101 with their webs.

At intervals, curious circular objects, each looking like an aluminium motor-tire with a soup plate attached to it, lay on the ground or hung in mid-air by their wires. These were the great gas-valves by which the buoyancy of the airship was

controlled. Near the very centre of the ship a denser mass of wreckage indicated the quarters of the ill-fated passengers. Here domestic fittings such as staircases and water-tanks could be distinguished, and on the starboard side a row of gilded pillars—all that remained of the promenade deck—seemed to grin garishly like false teeth in a skull. A few flames still flickered on the ground, twelve hours after the wreck. Into this part of the wreckage men had to cut their way with blow-lamp, chisel and hacksaw to look for possible survivors and to get at the bodies of the dead.

The ridge on which the airship struck is thinly wooded with hazel and oak bushes, and among these the forward portion lies. A polished aluminium engine gondola lay among the bushes almost intact, though its base was crushed by the fall. From the stern of the gondola the cylinders of one of the heavy oil engines projected into the air. Behind it the boss of a wooden propeller rested on the ground, the blades, snapped off short, appearing as thick as a young tree. At the forward end the smaller airscrew for driving the electric generator, with the tips of its blades broken, was still in place. On the top of the car lay the cooling radiator; beside it a fuel tank; above it, beyond a few feet of tangled girders, was the open sky.

#### SHATTERED FRAMEWORK

The extreme nose of the airship lay on the summit of a hill. From this point, looking back down the hill, the whole carcass of the airship lay before me, a mute witness to the tragedy of hopes shattered and lives sacrificed. The long, twisted girders writhed on the ground in parallel lines. On each side the remains of the cross-frames rose like broken ribs, and in the distance over the arched skeleton of the airship's tail, itself as large as the entrance to an ordinary railway station, the frame of her vertical fin rose mournfully against

the sky and the balance rudder, still rocking on its hinges, swung aimlessly like an indifferent weathercock in the wind.

At the point where the airship struck the earth the framework which took the strain of mooring at the mass lay huddled on the ground. The hollow spindle through which the mooring cable passed seems to have struck the ground directly, for it is caked with mud. It may have fallen vertically when the rest of the structure collapsed.

Hanging from the base of the hollow spindle by its wire was an electric battery or switch-box, and this suggests the most likely cause of the fire. The engines of R 101 ran on heavy oil instead of petrol. This was indeed the most important innovation in her design; it was intended to make her safe from fire in a tropical climate. Owing to the absence of petrol her passengers were even allowed to smoke on board, and their destruction by fire under the cold sky of Northern France is the more tragic. On her first flights R 101, though her main engines ran on oil, was equipped with starting engines using petrol, and a small quantity of the more volatile fuel therefore had to be carried. Before the flight to India the forward engines were fitted with starting apparatus worked by heavy oil, but petrol starting engines were still carried astern.

When the airship struck the ground the smashing or tearing off of an engine-car, of the control-car, or of any important part of her accommodation would break the electrical connections of her lighting and produce short circuits, which would produce flashes or sparks. Such flashes, igniting the small supply of petrol, would be quite enough to start the fire which consumed the ship, or they might do so equally well if they occurred in a stream of hydrogen caused by damage to the hull and gas-bags. A still simpler explanation is possible. As the engine cars struck the ground they were forced into the envelope of the ship, which collapsed on them and the hot

exhausts of the engine were probably brought into contact with the gas-bags. Such a fire once started would in a few seconds sweep the ship from end to end. R 101 may have been relatively safe from fuel fires, but she carried 5,650,000 cubic feet of hydrogen, which more than made up for the absence of volatile engine fuel.

## THOMAS HARDY BURIED

From the *Morning Post*, Jan. 17th, 1928

*Thomas Hardy was buried in the Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey. At the same time his heart was buried in the grave of his first wife in Stinsford Churchyard, Dorsetshire.*

### BY OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

To all that the Abbey enshrines of the spirit and tradition of the English nation, another noble memory was added yesterday. In the Corner, consecrated by the names of those who, more securely than the Captains and the Kings, have enlarged the Empire of the English language, were laid the ashes of one whose undisputed mastery in prose and verse has given back a kingdom to the English Crown.

Next to his great progenitor, Charles Dickens, now lies the treasureable dust of Thomas Hardy—whose genius, not less than that of Dickens, has given life more enduring than stone or brass to the English scene and character. If King Alfred founded the kingdom of Wessex, it is Hardy, its chronicler, who has recreated it, and who has made its frontiers world-wide.

It was but fitting, therefore, that he, who had loved to live retired on the soil which had nurtured and inspired him, should in death assume the dignity that was his right, and

receive the homage of a nation which ennobled him, as by himself it had been ennobled.

#### LIFE'S IRONY

Of all 'Life's Little Ironies' that underlie Thomas Hardy's philosophy, surely none was keener than yesterday's Abbey burial of this Mellstock worthy—this ultimate triumph of the prophet of human frustration. No prouder achievement could crown a life's work than so honourable a close—celebrated in the temple of the nation's piety, attended by the foremost figures of the day, and made unforgettably significant by the eager participation of the people. Words that Hardy himself wrote might be used to sum up the meaning of it:

Further and further still,  
Through the world's vaporous, vitiate air,  
His words ring on—as live words will.

If yesterday's burial in the Abbey was unforgettable, it was due to no special pomp of circumstance. The Abbey, indeed, is a setting that lends incomparable dignity to any event. Its immemorial walls and the solemn ritual of its service provide the perfect form in which emotion can find expression. They lift all that is done at once to that exalted plane where 'the deathless things abide.'

And so it was yesterday. There was no pageantry, nothing, but for the organ and choir, canonically robed clergy, and multitude attendant, that might not have happened in Mellstock Parish Church.

But there was one emotion, deep, spontaneous, sincere, transfusing all, and transforming a service, as it were, into a sacrament. It was the emotion not only of reverence for a great man, but of affection for an old and cherished friend. It gathered as the congregation assembled, filling nave and choir and transepts. It became a presence, not to be put by, as from the western door the funeral procession approached, and the

voices of the choir were heard chanting the opening sentences: 'I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord. . . . Blessed be the name of the Lord.'

#### THE PROCESSION

Before the altar a catafalque had been placed, and to this the coffin, draped in the richly and heraldically embroidered pall of white satin, was borne. Behind the Abbey clergy, in their gold and purple copes, followed the chief mourner, Mrs. Hardy, and the pall-bearers two abreast—the Prime Minister and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Sir James Barrie and Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Mr. John Galsworthy and Mr. Bernard Shaw, Sir Edmund Gosse and Mr. A. E. Housman, the Master of Magdalene, Cambridge, and the Pro-Provost of Queen's, Oxford.

The clergy passed to their places in the chancel, and the pall-bearers were ranged on either side of the coffin, raised high above the level of the eye. Conspicuous among the pall-bearers, as they ranged themselves on either side of the catafalque, was white-haired Mr. Bernard Shaw, whose stature dwarfed that of the still ungreying Mr. Kipling beside him. It was impossible not to reflect that Mr. Shaw's presence on such an occasion and in such company would hardly have been possible not so many years ago; and that the office of the day served not only the consecration of Thomas Hardy's ashes, but the literary canonisation of the author of *St. Joan*. Psalm *xxiii*, 'The Lord is my Shepherd,' having been sung, and the lesson from *Ecclesiasticus*, 'Let us now praise famous men,' having been read, the procession of the clergy and mourners was re-formed as the coffin was borne to the grave near the door of the South Transept.

#### COMMITTAL SENTENCES

There a platform, draped in purple and bordered with many beautiful wreaths, had been built, and there the com-

mittal sentences were spoken by the Dean as the urn containing the ashes of Thomas Hardy was laid in its last resting-place.

Upon the silence that succeeded broke presently the voices of the choir in the anthem, 'I heard a voice from Heaven'; and then followed the familiar but ever newly significant prayers from the Order for the Burial of the Dead.

Once more the procession re-formed, and returned to the chancel, when choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, 'Lead, Kindly Light.'

Then silence again; and then the *Nunc dimittis* by the choir, as exquisite prelude to the Blessing, spoken by the Dean.

Only one thing remained to complete the service—the rendering of the organ of the Dead March in Saul, whose last swelling chords seem to bid defiance to death.

Solemnly the procession of clergy and mourners re-formed, and through the bowed and standing congregation passed through the choir and nave out by the western door.

No ceremony else. All that could express a nation's homage had been done. To the sheltering shadow and silence of the Abbey are left the ashes of Thomas Hardy and the memorial of his name—he, of whom the word that he wrote of another might be well spoken:

You have dropped your dusty cloak,  
And taken your wondrous wings  
To another sphere.

SCENE AT STINSFORD  
POET'S HEART BURIED UNDER GIANT YEW  
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

DORCHESTER, *Monday.*

Under a giant yew tree in Stinsford Churchyard, in the grave where lies his first wife, the heart of Thomas Hardy was laid

this afternoon in bright sunshine. The little churchyard held nearly a thousand mourners, drawn mostly from the countryside, but not a hundred and fifty of them could enter the little church where the casket rested on a stool in the chancel.

Below the casket was a wreath of lilies from Mrs. Hardy, inscribed 'To my Darling,' and a wreath of laurel from his brother Henry and sister Katharine.

In a front pew were Mr. Henry Hardy, Mr. J. Antell, a cousin, and the servants from Max Gate.

The scene in the church while the short, simple service was conducted by the Vicar, the Rev. H. G. B. Cowley, might have come straight from the pages of one of Hardy's books. This is the Mellstock of his *Under the Greenwood Tree*, and in the congregation were living representatives of old William Dewy, and Fancy Day and Dick Dewy, although the old gallery where the fiddlers and the choir were is now no more.

Three of Mr. Hardy's favourite hymns were sung: 'O God, our help in ages past,' 'Lead, kindly light,' and 'Through all the changing scenes of life.' The Twenty-third Psalm, another favourite, was sung, the village choir leading the singing. During the singing of the *Nunc dimittis* the Vicar carried out Mrs. Hardy's wish in bearing the precious casket from the church to its last resting-place.

#### IMPERSONATOR OF TESS

The crowd in the churchyard made way for the Vicar and Mr. Henry Hardy, who followed him, and then closed round the open grave. Country folk mingled with representatives of county families in one solid mass.

The voice of the Vicar reached them, saying, 'We commend into Thy hands the soul of this our brother, and we commit his mortal remains to the ground.'

The casket was then lowered into the grave, which is between the graves of Mr. Hardy's father and mother on one



side and a sister on the other. Mr. Henry Hardy dropped a bunch of violets on the casket, and was followed almost immediately by a woman in deep mourning, who dropped in a simple posy of white flowers, on which was inscribed, 'From the sorrowing woman he called the Impersonator of Tess.'

This was Mrs. Gertrude Bugler, the author's favourite Hardy player, whose portrayal of the tragic Tess was always a matter of great personal pride to Mr. Hardy. Half a dozen Hardy players were present at this last scene.

For hours afterwards crowds filed past the grave and had a last look at the casket, now almost hidden by flowers which came from mansion and cottage alike. One wreath of laurels bore the simple inscription: 'From Hardy's Cottage'; another was 'From the Provost and Fellows of Queen's College, Oxford, of whose Society Thomas Hardy was an honoured and distinguished member. His work will ever be remembered especially by those who for successive generations passed through his academic home.'

The inscription on the casket was 'Thomas Hardy, O.M. Born June 2, 1840. Died January 11, 1928.'

## THE ALLIES' ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

BY W. T. MASSEY

From the *Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 17th, 1917

*W. T. Massey has been connected with the Daily Telegraph ever since I can remember. He is working Fleet Street at its best—conscientious, reliable, efficient. He was a special correspondent with Allenby's army in Palestine, and the following description of the Allies' entry into Jerusalem is one of the best descriptives that the war produced. Massey is now the Telegraph's news editor.*

JERUSALEM, December 11.

FOUR centuries of Ottoman domination over the Holy City of Christians and Jews and 'the sanctuary' of Mohammedans has ended, and Jerusalem the golden, the central site of sacred history, is liberated for Christians and Moslems alike from the thralldom of the Turk. War has removed the Holy City from the sphere of the Turk's blighting influence, but though there was the sound of the bitter clash of arms around it, no British bullet or shell was directed against the walls. An epoch-making victory which will stir the emotions of countless millions of Christians and Moslems throughout the world, has been achieved without so much as a stone being scratched or an inch of wall destroyed, and the sacred monuments and everything in Jerusalem connected with the Great Healer and His teaching, have passed on to future generations untouched by our army's hand. In none of her seventeen captures has the city of Jerusalem escaped absolutely unscathed, and it is to the glory of British arms that this most venerated place on earth should have come through the ordeal of battle unharmed by even the disturbance of a particle of its ancient dust.

The Turks were forced to withdraw by General Allenby's

strategy and the valour of his army. There was no repetition of the fighting about the walls which during the thousands of years of its glorious age stand as epochs in its sublime history. The inviolability of the sacred place was respected with due reverence. No British gun was sighted to within a considerable distance of the walls. The Turkish artillery fired from a position quite close to the Holy City, and the enemy guns thundered from the Mount of Olives, but of our fire the inhabitants could make out nothing more than the distant rumble of guns and bursts of musketry carried on the wings of the wind. General Allenby put the sanctity of the Holy Sites before every other consideration, and only approached the city when the pressure of his troops in the mountains west and north-west forced the enemy to yield to superior strategy.

We waited for this eventful day with patience, for we knew the day would come. Some of our warriors, English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Australians and New Zealanders, have been looking on Jerusalem from the distant hilltops for a fortnight, their blood coursing quicker through their veins at the thought that presently they would assist at its capture. They feel keen pride in the part they took in securing this glorious victory, and they count as nothing the arduous conditions of the past six weeks and the big sacrifices they have willingly made to achieve a result of momentous import.

#### ENTRY INTO THE CITY

I write this after witnessing the official entry of General Allenby, his Staff, and the military commanders of the detachments of French and Italian troops. It was a ceremony fully worthy of the cause for which we are fighting. In this hallowed spot, whence the Saviour's preaching of peace on earth and good will towards men was spread through the world, there was no great pageantry of arms, no display of the pomp and circumstance of a victorious army. The Commander-in-Chief

and a small Staff, a guard of less than 150 all told of allied troops, a quiet ceremonial of reading the proclamation of military law, and of a meeting with the notables of the city and the heads of the religious bodies, and official entry was over. There were no thunderous salutes to acclaim the world-stirring victory, which will have its place in the chronicles of all time.

No flags were hoisted, and there was no enemy flag to haul down. There were no soldier shouts of triumph over a defeated foe, but just a short military procession into Mount Zion, a portion of the city, 200 yards from the walls, and out of it.

The ceremony was full of dignity and simplicity, though it was also full of meaning. It was a purely military act, with a minimum of military display, but its significance was not lost on the population, who saw in it the end of an old regime and the beginning of a new era of freedom and justice for all classes and creeds. No bells in the ancient belfries rung, no 'Te Deums' were sung, no preacher came forth to point the moral to the multitude, but right down in the hearts of the people, who cling to Jerusalem with the deepest reverence and piety, there was unfeigned delight that the old order had given place to the new.

It needed no great parade of troops to tell the people that the new system of government was backed by strength. The fighting on the hills and in the deep-cut valleys of Kar, by the Holy City, was proof of that; but the absence of any triumphant display and the strict observance of the susceptibilities of all creeds were more eloquent than any words or outward show that the government by tyranny and oppression had passed with the retreating Turks. I shall presently tell what I saw and heard in the streets of the Holy City, but let me first describe what happened at the surrender of the city and at General Allenby's official entry.

## DELIVERANCE NEAR

On the night of December 8 our troops had made such progress against the Turkish entrenched positions that it was manifest that the enemy would soon have to retire to the north and east of the city, notwithstanding that he was moving reinforcements up the Jericho road in a desperate attempt to prevent the city falling from his possession. Our pressure was not relaxed for a moment, and early on the 9th our generals believed that the liberation of Jerusalem was at hand. The people also thought that their deliverance was near, and prayers were offered up in almost every house that our arms would be successful. At eight o'clock in the morning the Mayor of the city and the chief of police came out under a flag of truce. The Mayor, who holds his high civic position as a member of the Husseiny family, which possessed documentary proof of direct descent from Mahomet, through the Prophet's daughter, offered to surrender the city. The formal surrender was arranged at noon on the 8th. Between the offer to surrender and the formal acceptance, there was sharp fighting in the outskirts of Jerusalem, the Turks fighting more stubbornly than at any period of these operations, and meeting bayonet with bayonet. London troops were sent to the north of the city, and as they debouched from the defile they were heavily attacked by Turks lining the ridge, and a strong machine-gun fire was poured into them from the Mount of Olives. The ridge was carried by a superb bayonet charge, and by noon the Turks were pushed back so far that we occupied ground 7,000 yards north of the city walls. Welsh troops were operating from the south and east, and drove the Turks down the Jericho road.

This was the military position on December 9 at noon. Through the suburbs the people flocked into the highway and welcomed the Commander-in-Chief's representative by

the time-immemorial method of clapping hands, while old women and girls threw flowers and palm leaves on the road. The ceremony of surrendering the city was very brief. The general gave the Mayor instructions for the maintenance of order, and had guards placed over the public buildings outside the Holy City, but no soldier of the King passed within the walls that day. Though the sound of the guns had hardly ceased, the people were left secure and happy. The Turk was driven farther northwards and eastwards on December 10, otherwise the situation was unchanged to-day, when, at high noon, we had the unforgettable picture of the Commander-in-Chief's official entry. I doubt if any Briton witnessed the dignified progress of his country's victorious commander in Palestine without experiencing a strong feeling of pride and emotion. The occasion was of such far-reaching importance and of such great historic interest that a sense of patriotic pride was bound to rise in every Briton's breast, nor could any remain unmoved at the remarkably free and spontaneous expression of joy of these people who, at the end of three years of war, have such strong faith in our fight for freedom that they recognise that freedom is permanently won for all races and creeds by our victory at Jerusalem. That, without question, is what they feel, and that it was which accounted for the heart-stirring welcome to the Commander-in-Chief.

It was a picturesque throng. From the outskirts of Jerusalem the Jaffa road was crowded with people who flocked westward to greet the conquering general. Sombre-clad youths of all nationalities, Armenians and Greeks, stood side by side with Moslems, dressed in the brighter raiment of the East. The predominance of tarbush in the streets added to the brightness of the scene. It was obvious that they regarded the day as an important occasion, for they wore their best robes, and I saw many of them abandon their natural reserve and join in the vocal expression of welcome. Their faces, too,

lighted up with pleasure at the general's approach. This relaxation of the Arabs' usually stolid and immobile expression was significant. The flat-topped roofs and the balconies held many crying aloud a genuine welcome, but it was in the streets where the cosmopolitan crowd had assembled that one looked for and obtained the real feeling of the people. What astonished me were the cries of 'Bravo' and 'Hurrah' uttered by men who could have hardly spoken the words before. That the welcome was not artificial or manufactured I can testify, for quite close to the Jaffa Gate I saw three old Moham-medans with tears of joy coursing down their cheeks. They clapped their hands, but their hearts were too full to utter words.

General Allenby entered the town on foot. Outside the Jaffa Gate he was received by the Military Governor and a guard of honour formed by men who have done their full share in the campaign. Drawn up on the right of the gate were 110 men from the English, Scottish, Irish, and Welsh counties, who were fighting for the right yesterday. Opposite them were fifty men afoot, representing the Australian and New Zealand horsemen, who have been engaged in the Empire's work in the Sinai Desert and Palestine almost since the war burst upon the world. Inside the walls were twenty French and twenty Italian troops from the detachments sent by their countries to take part in the Palestine operations. Close by the Jaffa Gate, whose iron bars are rarely opened, is the wide breach made in the old walls to permit the Kaiser's entry when he was visiting Jerusalem in 1898. This was not used for to-day's historic procession, General Allenby entering by the ancient gate, which is known to the Arabs as 'The Friend.'

Inside the walls was a crowd more densely packed in the narrow streets than outside, but fully as enthusiastic. The Commander-in-Chief, preceded by his aides-de-camp, had on his right the commander of the French detachment and on his

left the commander of the Italian detachment. Following were the Italian, French and American Military Attaches and a few members of the General Staff. The guards of honour marched in the rear. The procession turned to the right into Mount Zion and halted at the El Kala citadel. At the steps at the base of the Tower of David, which was standing when Christ was in Jerusalem, the proclamation of military law was read in four languages in the presence of the Commander-in-Chief and many notables of the city. The terms of the proclamation promised that every person could pursue his lawful business without interruption, and that every sacred building, monument, holy spot, shrine, traditional site, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer of whatsoever form of the great religions of mankind will be maintained and protected according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faiths they are sacred, clearly made a deep impression on the populace.

While the proclamation was being read guns were booming to the east and north, and droning aeroplane engines in the deep blue vault overhead told of our Flying Corps denying passage for observers in enemy machines to witness an event which gladdened the hearts of all Jerusalem. Reforming, the procession moved up Zion Street to the Barrack Square, where General Allenby received the notables and heads of the religious communities. The Mayor and the Mufti, the latter also a member of the Husseiny family, were presented, and likewise the Sheikhs in charge of the mosques of Moar-el-Akaa, and the Moslems belonging to the Khaldieh and Alameieh families, which trace their descents through many centuries. The Patriarchs of the Latin, Greek, Orthodox, and Armenian Churches and the Coptic Bishop had been directed to leave Jerusalem by the Turks, but their representatives present were introduced to the general, as were also the heads of the Jewish Committees, the Syriac Church, the Greek



Catholic Church, the Abyssinian Bishop, and the representative of the Anglican Church. The last presentation was the Spanish Consul, who has in charge the interests of almost all the countries at war, and is a busy man. The presentations over, the procession returned to the Jaffa Gate, and General Allenby left Jerusalem. Thus ended a simple and impressive ceremonial, the effect of which is far-reaching.

#### A THANKFUL POPULACE

I will narrate a few personal experiences within the Holy City's walls to show the deep-seated feeling of thankfulness at the end of Turkish rule. I was talking in David Street when a Jewish woman, seeing that I was English, came up and said: 'We have prayed for this day. To-day I shall sing "God save the Gracious King, long live our noble King." We have been starving, but now we are liberated and free.' The woman clasped her hands across her breast as she said this, and repeated 'This is our day of liberation.' An elderly man in a black robe, whose pinched face told of a long period of want, caught me by the hand, and said, 'God has delivered us. Oh! how happy we are.' This was uttered with whole-hearted fervour. An American worker in the hospital, who knows the people well, assured me that there was not one person in Jerusalem who in his heart was not devoutly thankful for our victory. He told me that on the day we captured Nebi Samwil three wounded Arab officers were brought to this hospital. One of them, who spoke English, said, 'I can hip, hip, hurrah for England now.' The officer was told to be careful as there were Turkish wounded inside, but he replied that he did not care, and, in his unrestrained joy, he called out: 'Hurrah for England!'

In my wandering through the Sacred City I beheld with admiration the Mosque of Omar or Dome of the Rock, the place next after Mecca held to be the most sacred spot in the

Mohammedan world. At the church of the Holy Sepulchre the priests were delighted to show Englishmen that hallowed pile, and my experience in Jerusalem confirms what the American Red Cross worker told me. Jerusalem contains a happier people to-day than at any time within living memory.

I learned from an excellent source that the Turks were taken completely by surprise by our successes at Beersheba and Gaza. After the fall of the latter town they became very anxious about Jerusalem. On November 10 officers came up from Hebron, bringing archives. On the 12th Eaver visited Jerusalem and went to Hebron. On his return it was reported that Jerusalem was to be evacuated by the Turks. Some people were sent away, and others were warned to be in readiness. On November 16 a new decision was taken to defend Jerusalem at all costs. More German officers came to the Turkish army, and many technical troops.

## A NIGHT VISIT TO FORT DOUAUMONT

BY E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, C.B.E.

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*Mr. Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, C.B.E., was the eldest son of the late Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, a civil lord of the Admiralty. He died recently at fifty years of age, and since he was seventeen he had been more or less continuously in the midst of adventure. It began when on a visit with his father to the Sultan of Turkey he intervened in the Graeco-Turkish war and was taken prisoner to Athens. After serving in the South African War he acted as a newspaper correspondent during the Russo-Japanese War, and was with the Japanese throughout the siege of Port Arthur. Thereafter where there was war there was Ashmead-Bartlett. In 1919 he lived for several months under the Bela Kuhn regime in Hungary in the interests of the Daily Telegraph, which more recently he served with great brilliance in India, one of his 'scoops' being an interview with Mr. Gandhi. Both in peace and war he had a very pretty wit.*

EVER since the great victory of October 24, I have been doing my utmost to get into Fort Douaumont, and to see for myself what that historic fort—which the Kaiser called the key to France—was really like. I returned once to Verdun for this purpose, but then only succeeded in getting as far as the ruins of Fleury, further progress being rendered impossible by the enemy's incessant *feu de barrage*, which at that time completely cut off the fort during the day from the French lines behind. Two days ago I received an intimation from the General Staff that they had no objection to my making an effort to get through to Douaumont, but warning me that the task would be neither pleasant nor easy. I have now just returned, having successfully accomplished the object of my

curiosity with two companions and a French officer, and have no hesitation in saying that the experience was one of the most trying and difficult I have ever undertaken; and that I never wish to see Douaumont again until 'the war drum throbs no longer and the battle flags are furled.'

It must not be supposed that the Germans are quietly acquiescing in the recapture by the French of all the ground they won after six months' fighting. Far from it. They know they cannot retake the positions, and therefore they have become 'of no military importance,' but, on the other hand, to show their rage and spite, they bombard them and the lines of communication behind incessantly night and day, so as to render the occupation as difficult as possible by preventing supplies and ammunition from being sent up during the day. In fact, all this work has to be done at night under an incessant *feu de barrage*. It is only possible to approach the fort at night, and so I was told I must be ready to start at midnight, so as to have time to get in and get out again before the dawn, otherwise I would remain a prisoner in Douaumont until the following night. That evening I dined with the famous General Mangin, who accompanied Marchand to Fashoda, at his headquarters. General Mangin conducted the great attack which retook Douaumont on October 24, and he was wearing for the first time the Grand Star of the Legion of Honour, which President Poincaré had conferred on him the previous day in recognition of his great services. The General is one of the hardest fighters in the French Army, and has been wounded no fewer than five times in the course of the war. He is a short, dark, strongly-built man, and his features strike you as being more Italian than French.

It was a beautiful moonlight night when I set out for Verdun. At the gate the sentry complained that the Germans had just sent a shell close to his post, and advised us to move on quickly. A minute later there is the whistle of a shell, a

crash and the sound of falling masonry. Another bit of the ruins has been brought to earth. It is now ten o'clock, and we stop for two hours at the Archbishop's Palace. It was formerly the Archbishop's Palace until sequestered by the State. Two rooms are still intact. They are ornate and gaudy, and decorated with gold and crimson hangings. In the centre of the largest is a fine statue of a lady in a very light costume for the time of year. She looks singularly out of place amidst the surrounding ruins, the crumbling Cathedral and the fine old College with its superb cloisters. In fact, these two ornate rooms with their gilded furniture and crimson hangings and the lady in marble are about the only things left intact in Verdun. Why they have survived I cannot tell, but perhaps the Crown Prince had heard of her and wished to add so fair a form to his collection. The ruins of Verdun are singularly beautiful by moonlight. You could stop and gaze on the wondrous scene for hours, were you not constantly brought back to realities by the screeching of shells and the crashing of masonry, as Europe's housebreakers continue their favourite job. We have two hours to spare before starting, so I decide to sleep in the motor until the fateful moment arrives. It is in a courtyard surrounded by ruins. Close by is a substantial arch which has only been damaged. The chauffeur suggests we shall move the car under it as a measure of precaution. This we do, and then a shell crashes somewhere in the courtyard, but we feel comfortably safe, and soon fall asleep. It only seems a minute later when I am aroused and told it is time to start. My companions join me, and we motor through the ruined streets to the foot of the hills where the first line of forts stand. Here we abandon the car and start to climb to the top. It has been raining for days, and the mud is as thick as a wheat field and as heavy as glue. I have not gone more than a few yards when my feet slide from under me, and I roll into the slush, emerging covered with

yellow slime from head to foot. I curse, but the officer with us remarks, 'That does not matter, as in half-an-hour we shall all be in the same state. You are merely anticipating our fate.'

From the crest of the first line of defence we look down on the ruins of the fortress. What a superb sight! The moon lights up the ruins, shining on a thousand shapeless forms of what were once houses, churches, colleges, shops and military barracks. The shell-fire is incessant. The projectiles come screeching from afar and burst in fire over the town. But the work goes on just the same. If motor lorries are damaged, they are dragged aside and others take their place. If men are killed, they are buried by the road-side and others take theirs. The same thing goes on month after month, and will continue to go on until the enemy cries 'Enough!' That cry will never be heard from the French nation. With grim determination the French people and their Allies are slowly choking the German Empire to death. The French artillery is replying to the German fire. It seems monstrous that you cannot have a respite, even at night. When do gunners sleep? Never, it would appear, when you are on a modern battlefield. The shell-fire night and day is incessant. No wonder the munition-makers can hardly keep pace with the demand. The battlefield of Verdun has a different atmosphere from any other I was ever on. Its horrors are also greater. But, withal, there is a feeling of intense satisfaction. You recognise the completion of a great masterpiece. You feel, as you seldom have the chance of feeling in this war, that something vital and decisive has been accomplished, and that the work can never be undone. You stand on the ground where the last supreme effort of the Huns was broken. It was here that the turning-point of the war was reached. It was here, as was only fitting, that the French nation fought out the issue alone with their life-time enemy, and thus gave time to the Allies to prepare for the great retribution which is now slowly moving on towards its

inevitable end. It was at Verdun that the French people found themselves again, and emerged from the clouds which have hung over them for forty-five years. We stop and gaze for some time on this wonderful scene. The night is so bright, lit up by a full moon and thousands of stars. Suddenly one star of peculiar brightness steers a course at amazing speed amidst its companions. It is a strange phenomenon we have never seen before. Then someone suggests it is a giant French aeroplane brilliantly illuminated with electric light sweeping homewards from the German lines.

But now it is time to pass on if we are to enter Douaumont and get out again before dawn. It takes, so our guide reminds us, at least three hours' walking even under the most favourable conditions. We now enter the *boyau* to make our way to the foot of the Côte de Froide Terre, the last position held desperately by the French for six months on that long, dreary, corpse-sown ridge, which rises gradually to Thiaumont, and then on to Douaumont itself. The mud in the *boyau* is frightful. It comes up to your knees and crawls down to your ankles through the tops of your boots. You slip and slide and fall and curse as kilometre after kilometre is passed. The French officers, in their blue uniforms, are soon khaki-coloured like ourselves. After an hour-and-a-half's walking, we climb to Froide Terre. This is a solid concrete shelter that has remained intact under the incessant bombardments. We enter it, for here we must find a new guide, who can take us the remainder of the way. Inside, the scene resembles the fo'c'sle of a ship in the days when merchant sailors were little better than slaves. There is a wooden table and ranged round it are wooden bunks. The atmosphere is foetid. Each bunk contains a form rolled in a blanket. All are trying to snatch a few hours' sleep before the game of war is renewed at dawn. The officer on duty is seated on a bench by the telephone. His is surprised at the entry of strangers, and still more so when he learns we

propose to go on to Douaumont. He points out the difficulties and dangers of the enterprise, and then, having done what he considers his duty, he offers his aid on hearing we are authorised to make the attempt. A guide is what we require, and he gives orders for a man who knows the direction—there is no road—to be aroused. It seems cruel to take anyone on such a trip. Then he asks if everyone has a helmet and a gas mask. At this point I discover I have left mine at home, as usual, so he kindly lends me another. Then we emerge from the warmth into the cold night air again, having discarded everything and every garment that was not absolutely essential. We stand shivering outside, and contemplate the next stage in our dreary journey.

The sight is not encouraging. The shell-fire is incessant, and you hear the screech of the missile and watch the bursts as the Huns put up an incessant barrage in front of Douaumont right across the track we must take. The bright moon has disappeared behind dark clouds which are rolling up from the south-west. Behind us the French guns continue to thunder away. Our guide shouts 'En avant,' and plunges forward into the mud. There is still the remains of a track and on this boards have been placed. We try to walk on these, but in the darkness it is very difficult. I hear a groan from one of my companions, and on looking back see him trying to pick himself out of the slime. Suddenly the track ends and we strike across country, entering a moon crater of shell holes full of water, which, with the moonlight shining on them, resemble a vast number of small ponds, separated by tiny banks of mud. Over these mud tracks we try to progress, but the task is almost impossible. You fall at every step, even with the aid of a stick. I can only relate my own experiences, but everyone else's were the same. I stumble and fall and recover only to fall again. I am now simply a moving portion of the mud which surrounds me. The guide makes no better



weather than I. He stops suddenly, and says, 'Take care you don't fall into the shell-holes. They have six feet of water in them, and if you fall in you may never come out.' This is an obvious truism. If you do slide into one of those glittering, moonlit holes, it is doubtful if you ever would emerge. To avoid such a catastrophe you proceed most of the way on all-fours. Your arms are just as good as legs in such an emergency. Now we enter the shell zone, or, in other words, the last 2,000 yards which separate you from Douaumont. The Huns bombard this furiously with 6-in. shells, which come from all directions and burst at the most unexpected places at the most unexpected moments. The countryside is alive with them. You hear an appalling screech coming through the darkness. Instinctively everyone falls flat in the mud. The monster bursts with the sound of the final crash of a brass band. You do not look up; you lie with your face buried in the mud waiting for the humming birds—the fragments of the shell which fly round like bees humming for the particular flower on which they long to alight. You wonder on which part of your anatomy they will descend. You thank God when the last bit has alighted with a thud in the earth beside you. You don't bother about the chunks of mud thrown up by the explosion. They can and do hit you anywhere you like. It is almost a pleasure when one has struck you and you realise it is not encasing a fragment of steel. Then you push on another few yards until you hear the next aerial motor-'bus coming your way. At first you are horribly frightened, but then you are grateful for being alive. It seems incredible that any of the party CAN be alive.

Now the moon goes in, for the clouds have come over us and it starts to pour with rain. We are soon soaked through, but hardly notice the annoyance and discomfort. We crawl on, sweating profusely in spite of the cold. Excitement keeps you very warm on a cold night. Suddenly there looms up

before us a dark mound. There are figures round it and we make for it. It is a *Poste de Commandement*, that is to say a kind of concrete shelter that existed before the war, and which has not been destroyed. The Huns are now redoubling their fire, and we rush down the narrow entrance to this post, using the excuse that we want to get out of the rain. Inside are sleeping figures rolled in grey blankets, lying on the muddy floor. The place seems a palace of luxury and comfort. The officers on duty welcome us, and undertake to provide another guide, for ours says he does not know the way any farther, and if he does he has a perfect right to cut such an acquaintance. A very small and active soldier is aroused from his slumbers. He regards us with a look of mingled curiosity and annoyance, and small blame to him. He will surely cut his annual subscription to the local paper when he returns from the war. We are about to proceed when the local officer says, 'Do not attempt to go yet. This is the worst time to pass. The Boches are firing their hardest now.' This seems both sound and true, for the ground which separates us from the dark outlines of Douaumont is lit up with bursting shells. 'Rest here for an hour.' Never were words more gratefully received. I lie down on the floor in the mud, with the rain trickling down on me, and soon I fall asleep. I remember thinking, 'If only that captain with us had any regard for our feelings he would say: "You can't go any farther."' But the captain has suffered so much already that he is determined to make the three of us suffer for our sense of curiosity.

I have no sooner gone to sleep it seems than I am aroused again. One of my companions says, 'Wake up. It is quieter now, and we have the chance of getting through.' I curse him and go outside. 'Quieter now.' The words are ironical, for the shells seem to be bursting thicker than ever, and an icy cold rain is pouring down in torrents. Our guide proceeds. We follow as best we can. This guide is horribly active, and

we would soon lose him altogether had not the captain ordered him to go slower. 'How far to Douaumont?' I ask. 'Fifteen hundred metres' is the reply. A chorus of groans from the darkness shows that everyone of the party feels the same as I do. We curse the day we were born and our folly at not being neutrals. The procession is now like the moving figures in a local shooting gallery. The shell-fire is incessant, and the projectiles burst around every thirty seconds, or maybe ten seconds. You no longer fall, that is quite unnecessary, because every time you hear a shell coming the entire party drop automatically, and lie as quiet as the corpses which surround them. One of our number falls too far in his anxiety to escape a fragment of Von Essen's preferred stock, and rolls over into a shell-hole full of water. Awful oaths arise from its muddy depths.

It takes a full hour to move eleven hundred yards when another black spot emerges out of the darkness. Someone says, 'Is this Douaumont?' 'Oh, no,' says the guide, 'there are 500 yards more, much more severe than this.' It is, in fact, another little local shelter used as a *Place de Secours*. We pass down the passage which leads to it. There are recumbent forms on every side. Groans arise from the darkness. Here are the fruits of the night's bombardment waiting until the stretcher-bearers can carry them back. Inside the surgeons are working. They suggest we should stop for a while until the Huns have ceased their *feu de barrage*. When does it stop, we ask. One officer says, 'In half-an-hour.' Another says, 'Not until 6 a.m.' A third says, 'It does not matter when you go. They fire all day and all night.' This seems to be the nearest approach to the truth. The groans of the wounded are so unpleasant to listen to that we decide to proceed. Then I notice that all the party are drinking from flasks. Out we go into the darkness again. The guide says, 'You must move quickly here, for this is the worst bit of all, where they concentrate

their fire.' Move quickly! The wicked irony of those words. Move quickly on such a ground and under such conditions! It is on this last 500 yards that the heaviest guns of both sides have been concentrated. The ground is torn to pieces, and the shell-holes are three times the size, and contain eight feet of water, some of them much more, but I like to average a night's troubles. If you fall into one you will be drowned unless someone can pull you out, and if you cling to the narrow ridges between them, a fragment of shell will probably hit you. On and upwards we crawl, scared to death. The guide moves too fast. He is small and light, and does not sink into the mud as much as the heavier members of the party. Instead of striking the mild bombardment which we were promised, we next run into the very worst of the Hun barrage. Instead of single shells every ten seconds or so, there are salvoes bursting round us. It is really getting too hot altogether, even for our guide. There is a huge crater with only two feet or three feet of water at the bottom. He flings himself into this and yells to the rest of us to do the same. In we go, and remain with our faces buried in the mud, not daring even to look up for a second. The shells burst all round and the fragments continue their horrid humming. We share this crater with the dead. All through the night I have been putting my hands on to nasty cold lumps or bones or fragments of uniform. At first I had no idea what they were in the darkness, but now the moon emerging from behind a cloud, I discover I am lying alongside fragments of the Crown Prince's legions. A decaying German, eaten away by time, is on one side of me; some bits of another are on the other. The smell is like the interior of a newly-opened vault. It is disgusting.

The shell-fire does not stop for a moment. In fact, it rather augments. Suddenly there are cries from the darkness and three figures emerge from the gloom. Two of them are endeavouring to support the third. The third is groaning hor-

ribly, and the two say, 'Est-ce que c'est le poste de secours?' We can only reply, 'No,' and point vaguely to the darkness behind. The three stumble on their way. Suddenly our guide has had enough, and no wonder, for the shell-fire becomes worse and worse. He yells out, 'En avant, il faut arriver au fort.' The only lump of battered earth looming up ahead certainly seems the only chance of salvation. He jumps up and, considering the difficulties, proceeds with amazing speed. We are in the real barrage now around the remains of what was once the fosse of the fort. I find I can travel almost as quickly as he can. There are now cursed Roman candles which the enemy are throwing around the fort. They seem to make you the most conspicuous figure in the world, and you forget all about Hughes and Wilson. After a Roman candle come a dozen shells. Suddenly my guide disappears. He has arrived at the sea of mud which forms the fosse and has jumped in. I roll in after him. We cross the fosse and reach the escarpment, which is merely a bank pitted with a frightful attack of small-pox, which has left holes twelve feet deep. We hug the bank like trout, crawling along it so as to allow the shells to burst on the further side. We hear shouts which seem a long way off, but we do not take any notice of them. We imagine our companions are close at our heels. I shout out to the guide, 'Stop!' But without lessening his pace, or even looking back, he replies, 'On ne peut pas s'arrêter ici.' He has reason on his side, for the shells are tumbling into the fosse with appalling detonations. 'How much farther?' I shout. 'Cent mètres,' comes out of the gloom. I follow him, stumbling and crawling and creeping through the mud. Suddenly he disappears into a tiny, dark hole, which I would not have even noticed. I don't know what it is or where it leads to, but it is a hole, and to me a hole at such a moment offers more attractive possibilities than a blameless life. So I follow. I rather dive into it. The narrow passage opens up, and I find myself in a con-

creted cellar with shivering figures standing round. I am in Douaumont.

It was five o'clock in the morning when I followed the guide into the narrow hole which is the entrance to Douaumont. I passed down a narrow passage which shortly opened into a wide and high gallery with a stone roof. It was packed with shivering Chasseurs, who form the garrison. These men had just been aroused from their slumbers, and were waiting the signal to leave the fort to go back for supplies, ammunition, etc. They were greatly surprised to see a stranger suddenly pop into their warren out of the darkness of the night. I waited a few minutes to recover breath, and then discovered that my companions, whom I imagined were close on my heels, had not yet made their appearance. I asked the guides what had become of them, but they did not know, so it seemed we must have lost touch in the darkness. We waited for about ten minutes, and then, as there was still no sign, we went back to the entrance and looked out into the ruins of the fosse. No one was in sight. We shouted, and then a voice was heard from somewhere in the gloom calling for the entrance. The shell-fire was still intense. We shouted back, giving the direction, and a minute or two later we saw dark figures apparently attempting to climb up the escarpment of the fosse instead of going along the bottom of the fosse. One of the guides yelled to them to keep down, and we saw all three figures stumbling and rolling down the bank and falling into the thick mud at the bottom. A minute later all three safely reached the entrance and came inside thoroughly exhausted. In truth, we presented a woe-begone spectacle. All of us were simply a mass of mud from head to foot, our clothes, faces, boots and hands being caked with it. The party then explained what had happened to them. In the darkness they had been unable to keep the pace set by the guides, and had been left behind. After falling hundreds of times into

shell-holes, they became so exhausted that they had to wait in a shell-hole under a heavy fire, expecting every moment would be their last. The captain, who is a big man, sank so deeply into the mud that they could only pull him out with difficulty. After a rest they reached the edge of the fosse without recognising the fort, which is, in fact, a shapeless mud heap. One of the party then took a false step and fell eight feet into the fosse beneath. He thought his last hour had come, but fortunately the mud was so soft and deep that he suffered no injury. Not knowing where they were or where was the entrance, they decided to climb up the bank in front, which would have brought them on top of the fort in full view of the enemy at dawn, when fortunately they heard our shouts and reached the entrance safely.

Being once more collected we pass down the gallery, which is quite uninjured, and descend a long flight of steps to the low galleries where the commandant is installed with his staff in a square, concreted room. He was just up when we arrived and welcomed us warmly. To our surprise, the interior of the fort is lit with electricity, for the Germans had left the motor in perfect working order.

It was very pleasant finding ourselves in a comfortable, concreted electric-lighted room after five hours' trudging through the mud, exposed to an incessant shell-fire, which had somewhat shattered the morale of the party. Someone suggested that a drink would be very agreeable. Here we made a curious discovery. We had set out with enough whisky to last for two days, in case we should be shut up in the fort, but on arriving at our destination every drop of it was gone. But never mind. It had undoubtedly helped us through the journey. In fact, I think a little was drunk in every shell-hole in which we stopped. The commandant in charge of Douaumont looks about thirty years of age. He says, 'You have only a short time to stop, if you wish to get out

again this morning. The enemy's barrage will not be so intense, and you will have a comparatively quiet hour in which to get back to Thiaumont. Come, I will show you round the fort.'

We follow. The fort of Douaumont is the largest and most important of the Verdun defences. A thousand men can, in fact, live comfortably in its capacious interior. It is a two-storied structure, that is to say, there is an upper level of galleries and a lower. Above the concrete is thirty feet of earth, or rather there was thirty feet of earth; but now the exterior has been churned into a troubled ocean of shell waves, and in some spots the earth is deeper and in others much less. The counterscarp galleries have been destroyed, except in two places, where machine-guns can still sweep what remains of the fosse immediately in front of those undestroyed counterscarp galleries. The only entrance is the small hole I have already described in the rear. The fort has two 75-mm. guns mounted in a revolving steel turret, and also two 130-mm. guns similarly mounted. The material damage to these turrets has been small, but the guns are out of action through the breakdown of the machinery and the smashing of the guns themselves at the muzzle. Although you can hardly recognise Douaumont as a fort from the outside, the interior has suffered extremely little damage, even after eight months of incessant shelling from the guns of both friend and foe. The lower galleries and the chambers which radiate from them are entirely intact, but the upper have been pierced in one place by the fire of the French 400-mm. guns, which have cut off all communication between the east and the west of the fort on the upper level. It is said that it was the entry of three successive 400-mm. shells which did the damage, and caused the Germans to abandon the position before the attack on October 24.

The old fort has, in the eyes of the French, more than



justified its existence, and has withstood a terrible hammering in a truly marvellous manner. There are wells, but at the present time the water is undrinkable, and all the water for the garrison has to be brought up by hand and stored in the tanks, which were found intact. The commandant showed us every detail of his interior organisation. The Germans have certainly been good tenants, and had no time to work any destruction before they abandoned the position. Every gallery and chamber has its use denoted on white sign-boards, which still bear their German lettering. The first steps taken by the French were to provision the fort and to collect a sufficient water supply, to enable the garrison to hold out for several days should their communications be cut by the enemy's barrage fire. This has been no light task, because every biscuit and every litre of water and of petrol for the engine has had to be brought up by hand over the ground I have already attempted to describe. But each day the carrying parties bring back a double supply of food and water, so that now reserve supplies have been accumulated. The life of the garrison is no bed of roses. The underground galleries are damp and cold, and there is no means of warming them, for no fuel was found in the fort and it has been impossible to bring any up. Both officers and men live on biscuits or bread and canned meat, as it is impossible to do any cooking for a similar reason. The barracks for the garrison consist of long vaulted chambers radiating from the galleries and containing double rows of wooden bunks. Inside you see hundreds of warriors off duty rolled in their blankets asleep.

Especially interesting was the spot in the upper galleries where the 400-mm. shells had entered. Dawn was breaking, and the pale light was shining through this arch cut out of the solid concrete by these heavy shells. Sentries stood guarding the aperture, which is rapidly being put in a state of repair. You look out and beyond on to a sea of huge shell craters.

There are no luxuries or comforts of any sort for the garrison, for it has only been possible to carry up the bare necessities of life and a reserve supply of ammunition. I made my way through all these long galleries, damp, cold and filthy, and studied the heroic defenders. They are great fellows, these Chasseurs. They are cold and caked with mud, and weary from the incessant labour of carrying up supplies, but ever determined and indomitable. They have got back the fort and will never give it up. The French officer is supremely efficient. He understands his job and revels in his work. This young commandant had every detail at his finger-tips. He knows to the last biscuit and tin of meat exactly what supplies he has in the fort and how he can daily augment his reserves. Every step necessary for the defence of the fort is being taken by him. His machine-guns cover every avenue of possible approach. As he completes new embrasures for his machine-guns, the German gunners endeavour to smash them up. All day and all night this work of putting Douaumont in fighting trim again goes on. It will soon be just as good as it ever was, but for its battered exterior, which must remain as it is until the end of the war.

By the time we have completed our inspection of the interior, the commandant remarks, 'You ought to leave at once if you wish to get down before the barrage commences again.' We have to go, but the prospect of going outside again when you feel so safe after the night's adventure is not a pleasant one. Endeavouring to show a detachment we are far from feeling, we say goodbye and make our way to the narrow exit. It is now broad daylight. A stream of men are working their way amidst the shell-holes to the fort. They are laden, and can hardly walk or even crawl in the heavy mud. Some are carrying a dozen water bottles, others biscuits, others sacks of bread, others petrol; everything, in fact, necessary to keep the fort and its garrison going for another day.

One man reaches the door and collapses from sheer fatigue, dropping his burden with a crash. His officer helps him up, remarking, 'Allez, reposez-vous un peu.' The man drags his weary feet down the gallery and disappears. It is terrible hard work this carrying supplies to Douaumont. These figures stumbling, rolling and picking themselves up again amidst the countless miniature lakes make a curious picture. They hardly resemble human beings, so caked are they with mud. They look like mud balls animated with life, but with no control over their limbs. Do not imagine that the shelling has stopped. Far from it, but it is not so heavy as when we entered, and now we can see our way a little. Even as we clear the narrow entrance a succession of three big shells burst within a few yards, throwing the mud in all directions.

We do not linger in that horrid ditch, but climb the counter-scarp as quickly as possible, and pass on down the slope towards Thiaumont. It being daylight you are able to see the exact nature of the ground over which we passed in the darkness. The marvel is that we ever succeeded in getting into the fort at all without falling into the innumerable shell-holes which contain six feet to eight feet of water. Some of these pools look clean and fresh, others are covered with a dark slime, and yet others are bright yellow caused by the explosions. In some of these holes bodies are protruding above the water; in others fragments of humanity are floating. Others contain broken rifles, bits of uniform, fragments of shells, and the countless debris of the battlefields. We find we have passed over an open cemetery. You cannot move a yard without treading on or jumping over what was once a man or a portion of one. Every square foot of this ghastly wilderness is sown with human bones. Over this ground infantry have fought for months. The majority of the corpses are German, as you can tell by the fragments of uniform and equipment. God knows how many thousands must lie in this waste.

There has been no effort to bury the dead, or if there has, the bodies have been thrown to the surface again by the incessant shell-fire. The smell is revolting. Our clothes carry the odour away from Verdun, and you cannot get rid of it, because all through the night, unknown to ourselves at the time, we have been crawling over this cemetery. On our way down we pass the endless swarm of blue, sweating, cursing, toiling human ants, who are carrying up supplies to the fort. Some get there, some are killed, and many wounded, but the stream never stops. A delicious sense of relief comes over you as you get farther and farther down the slope of this ghastly ridge, the bloodiest and most vile in the whole world. How you pity the poor devils who have to make their way up. Farther on you find a battalion of Territorials endeavouring to make a road amidst the mud. The task is almost beyond human powers, and all they can do is to throw shell-holes into one another. We have yet further trials to face. The hour of comparative respite is soon over, and we are chased by the enemy's shells right back into the town of Verdun. But we have been into Douaumont, and you feel that is an achievement. Someone asks if we want to visit another fort. This bad joke does not go down, and we enter our motor-cars 'fed up' with forts, mud and shells.

## THE PIT MOUTH

BY H. M. TOMLINSON

From the *Morning Leader*, April 7th, 1907

*Though H. M. Tomlinson writes prose, he is a poet. He was on the staff of the Morning Leader, which died the death some years ago, and was literary editor of The Nation during the Massingham editorship. He loves the sea and all that has to do with the sea, and he writes of it with a restraint and beauty as unlike the mood of Conrad as two things can be unlike, but with an irresistible charm. Tomlinson is a diffident self-contained man, who has never sought fame and has successfully avoided notoriety.*

THERE was Great Barr, idle, still, and quiet. Through the Birmingham suburbs, out into the raw, bleak winter roads between the hedges, quite beyond the big town smoking with its enterprising labours, one approached the village of calamity with some awe and diffidence. You felt you were intruding; that you were a mere gross interloper, coming through curiosity that was not excused by the compunction you felt, to see the appearance of a place that had tragedy in nearly all its homes. Young men streamed by on bicycles in the same direction, groups were hurrying there on foot.

The road rose in a mound to let the railway under, and beyond the far dip was the village, an almost amorphous group of mean red dwellings stuck on ragged fields about the dominant colliery buildings. Three high, slim chimneys were leisurely pouring smoke from the grotesque black skeleton structures above the pits. The road ran by the boundary, and was packed with people, all gazing absorbed and quiet into the grounds of the colliery; they were stacked up in the hedge banks, and the walls and trees were loaded with boys.

A few empty motor cars of the colliery directors stood about. A carriage-horse champed its bit, and the still watchers turned at once to that intrusive sound. Around us, a lucid winter landscape (for it had been raining) ran to the distant encompassing hills which lifted like low ramparts of cobalt and amethyst to a sky of luminous saffron and ice-green, across which leaden clouds were moving. The country had that hard, coldly radiant appearance which always impresses a sad man as this world's frank expression of its alien disregard; this world not his, on which he has happened, and must endure with his trouble for a brief time.

As I went through the press of people to the colliery gates, the women in shawls turned to me, first with annoyance that their watching should be disturbed, and then with some dull interest. My assured claim to admittance probably made them think I was the bearer of new help outside their little knowledge; and they willingly made room for me to pass. I felt exactly like the interfering fraud I was. What would I not have given then to be made, for a brief hour, a nameless miracle-worker.

In the colliery itself was the same seeming apathy. There was nothing to show in that yard, black with soddened cinders and ash muck, where the new red-brick engine-houses stood, that somewhere half-a-mile beneath our feet were thirty men, their only exit to the outer world barred by a subterranean fire. Nothing showed of the fire but a whitish smoke from a ventilating shaft; and a stranger would not know what that signified. But the women did. Wet with the rain showers, they had been standing watching that smoke all night, and were watching it still, for its unceasing pour to diminish. Constant and unrelenting, it streamed steadily upward, as though it drew its volume from central fires that would never cease.

The doors of the office were thrown open, and three figures

emerged. They broke into the listlessness of that dreary place, where nothing seemed to be going on, with a sudden real purpose, fast but unhurried, and moved towards the shaft. Three Yorkshire rescue experts—one of them to die later—with the Hamstead manager explaining, with eager seriousness, the path they should follow below. 'Figures of fun'! They had muzzles on their mouths and noses, goggles on their eyes, fantastic helmets, and queer cylinders and bags slung about them. As they went up the slope of wet ash, quick and full of purpose, their comical gear and coarse dress became suddenly transfigured; and the silent crowd cheered emotionally that little party of forlorn hope.

They entered the cage, and down they went. Still it was difficult for me to think that we were fronting tragedy, for no danger showed. An hour and more passed in nervous and dismal waiting. There was a signal. Some men ran to the pit-head carrying hot bricks and blankets. The doctors took off their coats, and arranged bottles and tinkling apparatus on chairs stuck in the mud. The air smelt of iodoform. A cloth was laid on the ground from the shaft to the engine-house, and stretchers were placed handy. The women, some carrying infants, broke rank. That quickly up-running rope was bringing the first news. The rope stopped running and the cage appeared. Only the rescue party came out, one carrying a moribund cat. They knew nothing; and the white-faced women, with hardly repressed hysteria, took again their places by the engine-house.

So we passed that day, watching the place from which came nothing but disappointment. Occasionally a child, too young to know it was adding to its mother's grief, would wail querulously. There came a time when I and all there knew that to go down that shaft was to meet with death. The increasing exhaustion and pouring sweat of the returning rescue parties showed that. Yet the miners who were not

selected to go down were angry; they violently abused the favouritism of the officials who would not let all risk their lives.

I have a new regard for my fellows since Great Barr. About you and me there are men like that. There is nothing to distinguish them. They show no signs of greatness. They have common talk. They have coarse ways. They walk with an ugly lurch. Their eyes are not eager. They are not polite. Their clothes are dirty. They live in cheap houses on cheap food. They call you 'sir.' They are the great unwashed, the mutable many, the common people. The common people! Greatness is as common as that. There are not enough honours and decorations to go round. Talk of the soldier! *Vale* to Welsby of Normanton! He was a common miner. He is dead. His fellows were in danger, their wives were white-faced and their children were crying, and he buckled on his harness and went to the assault with no more thought for self than great men have in a great cause; and he is dead. I saw him go to his death. I wish I could tell you of Welsby of Normanton.

I left that place where the star-shine was showing the grim skeleton of the shaft-work overhead in the night, and where men moved about below in the indeterminate dark like dismal gnomes. There was a woman whose cry, when Welsby died, was like a challenge.

Next morning, in Great Barr, some blinds were down, the street was empty. Children, who could see no reason about them why their fathers should not return as usual, were playing football by the tiny church. A group of women were still gazing at the grotesque ribs and legs of the pit-head staging as though it were a monster without ruth.



## LENIN BURIED

BY JOHN SEGRUE

From the *Daily News*

*John Segrue is the Berlin correspondent of the News Chronicle. After a period as a sub-editor on The Universe and then as a reporter (under Nicol Dunn) on the Manchester Courier, he joined the staff of the Daily News in Manchester in 1910, representing it in Switzerland, Vienna, Berlin and Paris.*

*The armistice found him in Switzerland, whence he crossed into Bavaria and made his way to Berlin, being the first British special correspondent to enter Germany after the Armistice. Here he was able to score for his paper with an interview with Kautsky, to whom the Republican Government had entrusted the diplomatic correspondence with the Kaiser's marginal notes, exchanged between Germany and Austria, in the weeks before the war. Mr. Segrue returned to Berlin last year after three years in Paris as correspondent of his paper there.*

Moscow, January 27, 1924.

LENIN was buried to-day. As the Kremlin bells tolled four in the afternoon and the guns re-echoed throughout Moscow (and doubtless throughout all Russia) the coffin was lowered into the vault in the Red Square, barely a dozen yards from the Kremlin wall.

The Soviet Government's present intention is for the coffin and, if it is decided to embalm the body, the head of the dead leader to be visible for all time through the vault's glass covering.

Dynamite had had to be used to break up the earth for the grave, and the cold to-day in Moscow was of fantastic and phenomenal intensity.

At eight o'clock in the morning the thermometer registered

31 degrees below zero, and later in the day the temperature became almost insupportable.

Cameras occasionally fell from the frost-bitten hands of Press photographers; the breath of orators who delivered purposely curtailed funeral panegyrics seemed to freeze as they opened their mouths; and scores of men and women were carried half-unconscious with cold, to revive at mammoth fires, lighted in all the open spaces and streets of the city and hourly replenished by trunks of beech and fir trees.

It is estimated that close on a million people filed past the body while it was exposed to public view during the last few days, and a rough guess suggests that between fifty and seventy thousand people passed the catafalque erected in the open air on the edge of the vault between nine o'clock in the forenoon and four o'clock this afternoon.

Ears uncovered, even for a second, implied ears frost-bitten, so that heads were not bared when deputations, walking twenty deep, drew up alongside the coffin. A salute was given instead.

The music in the open air was of moving magic. A funeral march composed by a Pole, Monushko, was alone played by the numerous bands throughout the day; and the effect, in particular that of the uniform throbbing of the drums, drew tears, as I noticed, into the eyes of hundreds of soldiers—tears which, moreover, turned speedily into icicles.

#### THE LYING-IN-STATE

##### *Extraordinary Moscow Scenes at Midnight*

Before going farther, however, I must touch upon some of the scenes which preceded those of to-day. They were astounding even for a city with the history of Moscow.

From Wednesday evening until midnight last night vast throngs from all parts of Russia—workers from Petrograd, sailors from Kronstadt, peasants and their wives from the

distant and desolate steppes of Siberia, had been filing past the body as it lay in state.

The postponement of the interment from yesterday until to-day was due partly to a wirelessly request from French Communists, anxious to send a delegation, partly to the insistent, almost menacing, clamour of peasants *en route* for Moscow and determined to get a last glimpse of 'Father Ilitch' before he was lowered into the grave.

Hero-worship, indeed, reached such emotional lengths that workers of Petrograd petitioned for the body to be sent to Petrograd, while delegations of peasants urged that, as with mediaeval saints, the body should be mummified, not buried.

When the decision of the Government to insist on burial, even with the concession of one day's delay, became known, the crush to file past the corpse became almost dangerous in its intensity.

The train on which I reached Moscow yesterday from Riga was crowded with peasants flocking to the funeral, and as we approached the capital a long procession of sleighs told the same story.

The lying-in-state was in the Trade Union Hall, the former Club of the Nobility, a massive building near the Theatre Square, of marble and mirrored staircases and long-vistaed halls, now, as in Tsarist days, illuminated as the early dusk descends on Moscow, by thousands of lustres.

As midnight drew near, when the public view was due to end and the watch was to be entrusted to personal friends of Lenin and a few favoured deputations, two queues, entering by different doors, still stretched close on two miles into the gloom of the narrow, snow-mantled side streets.

#### A LAST PORTRAIT

Red Guards with fixed bayonets, strange reflected figures in the vast wall mirrors, shepherded the reverent and slow-moving

throngs, who had waited for hours outside in a temperature 25 degrees below zero, up staircases, along wide and lofty corridors, into the hall of pillars, where the body lay exposed.

Lenin—it was one of his fixed attitudes—flouted the altar when living, and, naturally enough, no emblem of the Church adorned the body or the coffin, or the *mise-en-scène*; but in the setting, and in the effort to provoke the emotions of the filing spectators, there was something of the luxury and lavishness of Orthodox worship.

The body rested in a coffin surrounded by great palms. It was clothed in brown, some symbol of the Red Army on its breast. The features, made familiar by a thousand photographs, had the repose which death alone imparts. There was a tinge of grey in the dark moustache. Workers, soldiers and peasants watched over the dead, and as I passed their places were taken by a deputation of twenty sailors, who had travelled over the ice from Kronstadt and thence made two days' journey by train to Moscow.

Light blazed from sixty chandeliers upon the dead and upon the filing throngs. Sudden bursts of music—now the unrelieved mournfulness of Chopin, now the more exultant note of Beethoven—came from an orchestra concealed in an overlooking balcony.

By the dead man's side stood his widow, completing a vigil of close on seventy-two hours, and a sculptor placidly engaged in modelling.

Outside the building crowds of peasants and soldiers warmed themselves and their horses at huge log fires.

#### THE BURIAL

##### *Coffin borne by Workmen and Soviet Leaders*

To-day's ceremonies began in this same former Club of the Nobility, where throughout the night vigil had been kept by the widow and special friends.

The concealed orchestra played Beethoven's Funeral March and some of Wagner's more solemn music, notably Siegfried's Death from 'The Twilight of the Gods.'

A half-mist shrouded the city as the coffin appeared at the main door, carried by Stalin, Chief Secretary of the Communist Party, Zinovieff and six workmen.

These coffin bearers were relieved at frequent stages, and their task, in the penetrating cold prevailing, was a precarious one.

Peasant women remained at their prayers in the historic chapel of the Iberian Virgin as the procession passed, thus unconsciously affording a striking contrast between old and new Russia.

Chicherin and Krassin were among those who later carried the coffin to the catafalque. Whereas hundreds of thousands filed past the coffin during the day, the streets were now almost deserted of curious spectators. The Red flag dropped at half-mast on the pole of the central tower of the Kremlin; and from the Kremlin wall, silhouetted against a grey sky, hundreds of women looked down on the weird spectacle.

Dantesque scenes marked the end of the day. Scores of blazing log-fires, each encircled by men, women, and children, and horses, lighted up the church exteriors and houses, casting the towers of the Kremlin into vivid relief against the sky. Dense columns of smoke dispersed in the lower air, and caused a slowly drifting mist. Hundreds of firemen, carrying torches, marched round the Kremlin walls and over the city bridges.

At an advanced hour the queues of patient processionists stretched far back into the remoter suburbs.

## THE TWO MINUTES' SILENCE

BY SIR PHILIP GIBBS

From the *Daily Chronicle*, Nov. 12th, 1919

*In the best sense of the word, Sir Philip Gibbs is a man of feeling. He has never been able to acquire that detachment common among newspaper writers, and which in its way is often a considerable asset. Gibbs sits in the stalls, but he is always moved by the drama on the stage. That was very evident in his dispatches during the war.*

In two minutes' silence, there were five years of remembrance, and the unspoken prayer of multitudes thinking of their dead, and of many agonies, and of the unhealed wounds of the world and of all war's consequences—when yesterday, at the hour of the armistice, a year ago, our people, wherever they might be, stood still, and bowed their heads, and were silent.

The King's idea was fulfilled, in simplicity and in reverence, and I do not think there were any scoffers yesterday, any rebels against this way of celebrating the moment of history when the monstrous slaughter ended (on most battlefields) and the guns, the labouring guns, the noisy guns, ceased fire, after many tears.

Victory celebrations, victory marches, the riotous 'Mafekings' of mobs, stirred bitterness in some stricken hearts who had paid a hard price in their souls, or who looked around on life and said, 'Is this ruin our victory?' . . . 'Was it for this peace our men fought?' . . . 'This dead sea fruit—is that all we get?'

## FOR REMEMBRANCE

Yesterday, in the silence of those two minutes, the strange great soul of our people, made up of countless differences of desire, conviction, emotion, was stirred enormously—it is certain—by that dramatic act of thoughtfulness and remembrance.

It was an act worthy of a nation that will not forget the sacrifice of its youth, and for a little time, at least, in such moments as this, acknowledge in humility that it was saved from greater perils even than those which came and from even more dreadful than our present discontent. The idea was spiritual and great.

It was a wonderful thing that happened—a whole nation suddenly arrested in its activity and life in every street, in the very swirl of traffic, in the workshop and factories, on its railways and rivers, in its studies and kitchens, and standing to attention in a salute of the living to the dead, in an intense consciousness of the Power that controls our lives and destiny, and in a communion with all who shared the blows that struck us as a people. Out of that silence, over all the countryside, among all our multitudes, something should come—some goodness.

## IN THE CITY'S HEART

I was in front of the Mansion House when the silence came. A few minutes before then the usual tide was flowing and eddying, a tide of motor-omnibuses, lorries, cars and carts, swirling round by the Royal Exchange, in a spate below the statue of Wellington, with tributary streams from Threadneedle Street and Cheapside.

Crowds of men had come out from their offices, and were moving slowly backwards and forwards between the lines of motor traffic. There was a thick bank of people below the columns of the Royal Exchange. The pavements were blocked

by a sluggish procession of black-coated figures. The old pulse of life was beating at the heart of the Empire and the sound of it was unchanged—that low, murmurous roar of men and machines, which is the life of London.

Motors were sounding their horns to clear the way through the crowds. Their engines were throbbing. Many voices spoke in the voice of the crowd, so loudly in all this surge and struggle of traffic that only now and then could one hear a tune being played by a band above the balustrade of the Mansion House. It was a band of black-coated men—with the red caps of the Salvation Army—and the tune they played was 'O God, our help in ages past!'

The clock in a corner building said three minutes to eleven.

A little stream of motor-cars tried to get farther forward and failed. A city policeman held up his hand and checked them. The crowd stopped speaking to listen to their own silence. They looked up to the flagstaff above the Mansion House, where a furled flag was hauled up at half-mast.

Gradually, and not at a given signal, silence came over all these people, so densely packed, from which such a loud murmur had come before. Silence, deep, immense, beautiful, had already come to the multitude and the traffic, when from here and there a city clock chimed out the hour of eleven, one following another or mingling their notes. Then there was a noise of guns. The maroons were being fired in different parts of London, and many in the crowd by the Mansion House must have thought back to days when that noise of gunfire was always in their ears, by day and night, in ugly places, in desolate death-haunted places, and peace seemed as though it would never come, until one day, a year ago, it came.

#### FLIGHT OF THE PIGEONS

The City pigeons flew over the Mansion House roof, and one could almost hear the flutter of those grey wings—I



thought I heard it—in that strange, spiritual silence where thousands of men and women stood.

They were standing densely thronged in the roadway and on the omnibuses and lorries and motor-cars, and each man bared his head and stood at attention.

I doubt whether many of those men were praying consciously, or thinking consciously, or saying in their silence any definite thing in remembrance of the dead who were their comrades, or of the Darkness, through which they passed. I think each individual there, during those two minutes, was uplifted, taken outside himself as it were, by a sense of spiritual emotion around him and above him. I think a great unconscious, inarticulate prayer came up out of that silence.

#### HEART-BEAT OF HISTORY

These men listened in unearthly quietude and heard the heart-beat of history as though they were outside it, disembodied.

There were tears in men's eyes, and something of what the war meant in suffering, in loss, in valour, in wreckage of life's beauty, in the heroism of youth, in a world of trouble still about us, surged up with immense reminders.

Above the Mansion House steps a bugle rang out. It was playing the Last Post, as some of us heard it played many times by soldiers' graves. It was a salute to all those men of ours—those legions of youth—who fought and fell along those roads of war, after so many battles, so many hardships, such unwritten agony, on the way to that morning of Armistice.

By their valour it was that we live, with a chance of making life good for the world, if in such silences we see truth, clearer than hatred, greater than the meanness of our little egotism, nobler than the baseness that is in us now.

It seemed a long time that two minutes' silence before the

last wailing note of the bugle-call. The band played again—'Praise God from Whom all blessings flow'—flags fluttered up to the mast-heads, the people put on their hats again, the traffic moved, the silence passed, and the tumult of life was resumed. But of the silence of the people a new thoughtfulness was born. In such moments, leaders are made, and faith is inflamed.

## THE BORE SOME WAR

BY CHARLES E. HANDS

From the *Daily Mail*, June 16th, 1898

*Charles Hands was the god of working Fleet Street when I was a 'kid reporter,' and no man ever more fully represented the spirit of Fleet Street when life was not as strenuous as it is now. He is a Birmingham man, who worked for a while on The Star and the Pall Mall Gazette under the editorship of Harry Cust, and then became the star reporter of the Daily Mail. He is a little man who never in his life has failed in unselfish kindness. He has always had openly expressed scorn for everything mean and underhanded, and few men have ever been so well loved, and few men have ever so well deserved to be loved.*

TAMPA, FLORIDA, May 31, 1898.

I AM sick of Tampa; I am sick of the sight of sand; I am sick of sunshine and idleness; I am sick of swallowing liver pills; I am sick of quinine.

I long for the sight of an omnibus and the feel of a firm pavement under my feet, and the free enjoyment of the taste of a good glass of honest bitter beer.

The other day another Englishman and I, being sick of everything, including one another, conceived the devilish idea of drinking a bottle of Bass. It nearly killed us. That did not matter much: when you have been doing nothing but feel

nearly dead for hour after hour, and day after day, and week after week, then death from drinking a glass of good English beer offers the cheerful prospect of a notable achievement. We do not mind dying a human English death like that; the horrid part of it was that the beer did not taste nice. It had been kept on ice upside down and shaken; but all that would not have mattered if it had not been for the fact that before we had time to drink it it was half-boiled by the climate. I am sick of a place in which even Bass's beer does not taste good.

I am sick of a place in which

#### GLORIOUS WAR DEGENERATES

into a weary waste of time. I am sick of soldiers loafing among palmetto scrub; I am sick of watching white lines of tents change to dingy brown under the influence of sun and dust; I am sick of seeing the long row of chartered transports tied up week after week at the port; I am sick of the to-morrow which never comes.

I am sick of niggers—nigger men who, in torn, old cloth trousers held up by string-patched suspenders, blue shirts, and broken slouch hats, are ridiculously like the niggers of the music-halls, nigger women heavily built, slow moving from the hips, dressed in white with huge feathered hats. I am especially sick of the sight of nigger children. The little white children are so very little and so very white, and there is such a pathetic look in their pinched little faces and their thin little limbs; the black picaninnies are so very black and so bonny and chubby, as they crawl about in the sun with their polished faces shining. I am sick of seeing them; I long for the sight of a little London baby playing on a lawn.

I am sick of looking at six-mule transport wagons standing up to their axle-trees in sand, with a blue-shirted soldier perched hump-backed on the driver's seat. I am sick of handing out greasy dollar bills; I am sick of the keeper of the

wooden store who expects the things you want to express on Saturday. I am sick of the statement that General Miles is on his way from Washington, and that the expedition only awaits his coming to start for Cuba.

I long for ten minutes at the Army and Navy Stores, and a week with

#### A CAMPAIGN THAT HAS A PLAN.

I am sick of the assertion that Sampson has Cervera in a rat-trap, and that the decisive naval battle is only a matter of hours. I am sick of the silly trifles that have served as amusements. I am sick of the parrot behind the green lattice over the way that laughs like a woman; I am sick of the squirrels hopping about in cages on the boarded side-walk of the main street; I am sick of watching the acrobatic monkey on the balustrade of the coloured saloon; I am sick of carrying about little crawling long-tailed chameleons secured by a piece of cotton; I am sick of lizards and tree-frogs and the shrill chirpings of multitudinous crickets in the hanging moss of the live oaks; I am sick of little green snakes and all manner of reptiles. I am sick of sympathising with people lamenting the attentions of mosquitoes. I am sick of taking snapshots of people and scenes that I am tired of. I am sick of looking at other people's snapshots of cactus trees and palm trees, and myself, and one another. I am sick of meeting new American acquaintances; I am sick of the society of old London friends—they remind one so of London.

I am sick of discussing the reasons why in all the weeks we have been here there has not been any combination drill; I am especially sick of the circumstance that there has not been a single bit of serious military work. I am sick of

#### WONDERING WHAT WILL HAPPEN

when generals who, ever since the Civil War, have never commanded more than half a regiment, are called upon to

handle large bodies of troops. I am sick of wondering what will happen when volunteer officers, who know as much about soldiering as I know about finance, have volunteer soldiers to play with under fire. I am sick of mopping my forehead; I am sick of sipping ice waters; I am sick of finding fault with a silently-apologetic and unutterably stupid nigger waiter. I am sick of hearing of the defaults and shortcomings, and delays of the commissariat; I am sick of hearing of the deficiencies of the hospital stores.

I am sick of saying, 'Morning, colonel—I beg your pardon, I should say general,' to newly-made brigadiers. I am sick of asking volunteer colonels in brand new uniforms what they are by profession. I am sick of the unvarying reply that they are lawyers.

I long for some fun with an army that is ready, and knows its business, and hasn't nearly everything in the way of organisation and equipment to accomplish *de novo*.

I am sick of the heavy perfumes of flowers, and rocking-chairs on verandahs, and great gorgeous butterflies. I am sick of a climate in which there has not been a spot of rain for eight months; I long for a week in Manchester, where it rains every day and all day. I am sick of the interminable reminiscences of veterans; I long for an afternoon in the reading-room of the club where the oldest member never says a word. I am sick of arranging to join alligator hunts which never take place, and of organising shark fishing expeditions which never leave the hotel. I long for a land in which there is less to be done, but more energy for doing something.

I am sick of smoking Tampa-made genuine Havana cigars; I long for

#### A LONDON-MADE EGYPTIAN CIGARETTE

I am sick of the tune of the 'Star-spangled Banner'; I am sick of agreeing with the opinion that England and America allied

could lick the world. I am sick of paying five cents for rag newspapers which say in print all the things I am sick of hearing about. I am sick of dirty-chinned Cubans chattering Spanish. I am sick of everything and everybody; I am sick of myself. There is nothing for it but to light another Tampa cigar, and join in the general languor until dinner-time. Heigho! It is weary waiting for dinner now, for war to-day and to-morrow and, as far as one can see, for ever.

That is a new-comer, surely, that officer over there in the lobby. I do not remember to have seen him before, although there is something familiar about his face. But he must be a new-comer, for there is an alertness in his bearing and a suggestion of energy in his manner which prove that he has not suffered the consequences of spending a month in this enervating hole.

He seems to have brought down with him a breath of the stimulating Northern air. It briskens up the people about him. The officer with whom he is shaking hands stands up straighter and more erect than I have seen him stand since a fortnight ago. The rest of the people in the group all seem to feel the influence. They keep their eyes and their ears on the new-comer. He chats with them collectively and individually in an easy, careless style; but you can see that his words come quickly and spontaneously, and that they carry clear meanings and deep interest to the people to whom they are addressed. I even at a distance come under the new-comer's influence. Who, I wonder, is he? I name an acquaintance, who looks up languidly from his reverie. He gazes abstractedly for a moment, then interest jumps into his look. 'For the Lord's sake,' he cries, as he rose from his seat, 'it's the general !

SOMETHING'S GOING TO DROP PRETTY QUICK.'

General Miles! So he had come at last—the man whose coming we had looked forward to every morning and despaired of every night. A handsome, soldierly man, with a

European, soldierly look of smartness. His uniform seems to fit him better than any uniform we have yet seen. He is well on in middle age, but his broad, square shoulders and his compact figure carry his years very lightly. He has the well-formed aquiline features that you like to see in a leader, and the air of rosy, unflustered confidence in himself. In an hour after his arrival the hotel is all bustling. Tampa wakes up. Something is going to drop.

In the afternoon something does drop. An aide strides through the lobby to the bulletin-board, at which we have been gazing blankly these days after days. He pins upon it a printed document, and having turned looks round with a smile. We go up and look. It is an order for the Fifth Army Corps, together with cavalry and artillery, to prepare for immediate departure, some 12,000 troops in all—not many, perhaps, but practically the full effective strength of the regular troops gathered here in Tampa. General Miles has come and something has dropped.

We are off at last! We do not know where. Twelve thousand troops, good as they are, with twenty guns and a few squadrons of cavalry, we cannot be going to do very much. But we are going somewhere, we don't care where, to do something, we don't care what. We are sick of Tampa and doing nothing.

## THE DESTRUCTION OF SMYRNA

BY G. WARD PRICE

From the *Daily Mail*, Sept. 16th, 1922

*Ward Price was one of the most successful of the special correspondents at the Peace Congress. Before then he had seen a great deal of the war. Among his other characteristics he possesses that most priceless of journalistic attributes, persistence. There is no door that he cannot open, and no wall that he cannot scale. Few men of his age have travelled so much and seen so much, and have talked to so many celebrities. He has been for years one of the stars of the Daily Mail staff. His report of the Great Fire of Smyrna, which destroyed the city after its recapture by the Turks in 1922, is descriptive journalism at its best, written and transmitted, of course, under great difficulties. Ward Price was the only British correspondent to reach Smyrna in time to see its recapture by the Turks.*

ON BOARD H.M.S. 'IRON DUKE,'

OFF SMYRNA, Thursday, 4 a.m.

SMYRNA has been practically destroyed by a gigantic fire, which wiped out during the night all the town, except the poor Turkish quarters on the hill at the back and on the extreme fringe at the north towards the Point. Without exaggeration, the conflagration is one of the biggest fires in the world's history. The damage is incalculable, and there has been great loss of life among the native population.

Flames are still licking up all the quarters of the city, within a mile of which I am writing. The spectacle is magnificently terrible. Even the Great Fire of London in 1666 can have been no worse, for Smyrna counts 350,000 inhabitants. The scenes of frantic terror that have taken place during the night amid the Greek and Armenian population are made the worse by the incompetence of the Turkish authorities to deal with such a catastrophe and by the dread these Greeks and Armenians have for their Turkish conquerors.



What I see as I stand on the deck of the *Iron Duke* is an unbroken wall of fire, two miles long, in which twenty distinct volcanoes of raging flames are throwing up jagged, writhing tongues to a height of a hundred feet.

Against this curtain of fire, which blocks out the sky, are silhouetted the towers of the Greek churches, the domes of the mosques, and the flat square roofs of the houses.

All Smyrna's warehouses, business buildings, and European residences, with others behind them, are burning like furious torches.

From this intensely glowing mass of yellow, orange, and crimson fire pour up thick clotted coils of oily black smoke that hide the moon at its zenith.

The sea glows a deep copper red, and, worst of all, from the densely packed mob of many thousands of refugees huddled on the narrow quay, between the advancing fiery death behind and the deep water in front, comes continuously such frantic screaming of sheer terror as can be heard miles away.

Added to this there is the frequent roar and crash of exploding ammunition stores, accompanied by the rattle of burning cartridges, which sounds like an intense infantry action.

Picture a constant projection into a red-hot sky of gigantic incandescent balloons, burning oil spots in the *Ægean*, the air filled with nauseous smells, while parching clouds, cinders and sparks drift across us—and you can have but a glimmering of the scene of appalling and majestic destruction which we are watching.

It started as an insignificant outbreak of black smoke fourteen hours ago—at 2 p.m. on Wednesday—in the Armenian quarter, which lies a mile and a half inshore. Only a few people paid attention to it.

The work of embarking the last part of the British colony—which fortunately had been decided on on Wednesday morning—went on systematically, and all the British were

safely taken away before midnight. The British Fleet was also able to take off a number of the natives. I was on shore in the afternoon, and climbing on the roof of my house and looking towards the Armenian quarter I saw that two other fires had started in the same part of the city. But no one was yet uneasy. At 4.30 p.m., accompanied by General Kiazim Pasha, the Turkish commandant of the town, and two British officers, I went in a motor-car to a place outside Smyrna where I had yesterday seen the bodies of three murdered Greek girls.

From there we looked back on Smyrna. From the centre of the town a solid mass of black smoke was now pouring up.

'That seems a serious fire,' I said to the Town Commandant.

'Oh! We shall stop it by blowing up the houses in the localities,' he replied.

'These will go soon,' he added, as a loud report reached us.

'The fire was started by Armenians,' the general told me. 'There is a band of them barricaded in their church in the heart of the town with supplies of arms. Knowing that they cannot escape, they have fired their quarters in nine different places. We have arrested twenty-two of them.'

Such, at least, was the general's version.

#### *Thursday Afternoon.*

The fire is still spreading fiercely.

The situation of the surviving inhabitants is desperate.

On a rough estimate some 100,000 people are in danger of death and starvation.

#### *Thursday Night.*

Over the rough-paved streets from the town there poured on to the water-front panic-stricken, wailing crowds of Greeks, stumbling along under bundles of household goods. There were white-haired old women bent double, cripples staggering on crutches, blind men, led through this terror-stricken confusion with that strange abstraction of the sight-

less still on their faces, children wailing for lost mothers, dishevelled women praying and clutching their lank, black hair.

Many crouched on the quay, helplessly whimpering. A hundred tried to rush the British picket boats to which, under the guard of marines in sixteen batches at quarter-hour intervals last night, hundreds of the British colony were being marched down from the Consulate.

With pitying faces and cheering words the bluejackets rushed back the screaming throng from the boats, and the Turkish guard prevented the embarkation of any but British, driving the crowds farther away with levelled revolvers and swinging rifle-butts.

It was heartbreaking to see tiny children with big, frightened eyes held out in vain by beseeching parents. But the help of humanity was impossible.

Meanwhile gangs of prisoners, Armenians and Greeks, were being constantly marched to the surging quay under small guards of Turkish soldiers. At sight of the British flag they implored release.

One Armenian, emboldened by the presence of the British, plunged into the water and struck out from the shore.

The Turkish guard fired across the picket boat, killing him with a bullet in the head as he came to the surface.

Others, alleged starters of the fire, were summarily shot a few yards off, their bodies floating past our feet.

Thirty armed bluejackets went ashore to bring off the inmates of the British Maternity Home, hitherto not threatened. They returned over a crimson sea, the fiery light glinting on the sailors' bayonets while three mothers lay on stretchers amidships, their new-born babies crying shrilly under blankets.

Screams from the shore grew ever louder as many were pushed into the sea and drowned. When flames burst out on

the water front, rather than be roasted alive, some swam out and clambered aboard the few rowing boats near the shore. In these they came moaning alongside the *Iron Duke* and were tenderly helped up the ladder by bluejackets.

The admiral sent in all available craft to rescue as many as possible.

## EASTER IN SEVILLE

BY HAMILTON FYFE

From the *Daily Mail*, April 12th, 1908

*When I first knew Hamilton Fyfe he was private secretary to G. E. Buckle, then the editor of The Times. Then he himself became an editor, striving with an idealism characteristic of him to infuse a literary tone into the Morning Advertiser, the organ of the Licensed Victuallers. He was the first male editor of the Daily Mirror which, it may be remembered, began as definitely a woman's daily paper. Then for years he was one of the Mail's descriptive writers, travelling all over the world and describing the things that he saw with individual distinction. He saw a good deal of the war as a special correspondent, and was responsible for the famous message to The Times at the end of 1914 in which the country was warned of the British Army's lack of high explosives. Fyfe is a social reformer and a journalist with a conscience. With an entire disregard for professional advantage, he spent several years editing the Daily Herald which he found a propagandist sheet and left a newspaper. He is an attractive man with a gentle voice. In these days he is perhaps a little disillusioned.*

SEVILLE in springtime. What does it suggest to you? Hot, white sunshine, palms waving lazily against a forget-me-not blue sky, roses and carnations scenting the languorous air, orange trees aglow with golden lanterns, almond and double-

cherry blossom, geranium and wisteria covering house-fronts with pink and mauve delight?

Yes, it is all that. Every one of the squares and gardens which lend the city so green and friendly an aspect is joyous with the joy of spring. Peep into the patios of the houses and you see flowers in all of them. On the stalls at street corners lie heaps of big, fragrant violets and scented stock. Later, when the summer heats dry the earth up, life becomes a struggle to keep cool. Now the sun is still a friend and benefactor. In April this lovely, light-hearted land of Andalusia shows one its most attractive, most intoxicating side.

And then, too, Easter in Seville! Ever since I can remember I have promised myself this experience. I have seen in imagination the processions of penitents, the women in their graceful mantillas making the round of the churches, the sombre mournfulness of altars draped in black, then the glad magnificence of Resurrection masses. I have heard in imagination the wailing Misereres, chanted in darkness; the solemn hush of Vespers whispered in the stillness of the shadowy choir; the burst of triumphant music which proclaims the victory over Death. Now I have seen and heard in reality. And the real leaves imagination far behind.

\* \* \* \* \*

I came to Seville on Maundy Thursday, and the friend who met me at the railway station said: 'I hope you are prepared to stay up all night.' I said: 'Certainly, if there is anything to see.' He replied: 'You shall tell me that afterwards. Now we must get someone to carry your bags and walk to the hotel. No wheeled traffic allowed in Seville on Thursday and Friday in Passion Week.' This does not matter so much here, for the people are not much given to driving, except in the Paseo 'on Sundays and holidays and bonfire nights'; and the chief street of Seville is too narrow for carriages at all times, which gives it a lounging, gossipy Eastern character, both interest-

ing and agreeable, except when you happen to be in a hurry and seek to pass quickly through the throng. But to be in a hurry in Seville is unpardonable. You miss the whole charm of the place.

If the processions through the streets were organised by people who had any sense of time they would take about an hour to pass instead of five or six. They come out of the principal churches and they walk to the cathedral. This was a Lenten penance imposed in the Middle Ages upon the members of the brotherhoods connected with the churches. Each brotherhood carried round some specially sacred image or group of images, and the custom has been kept up, though now it is rather a show than a solemnity. Thousands of people take part in it, all lay people, no friars or priests, and all who do not take part consider it a religious duty to look on.

The 'penitents' wear the costume which we associate with the Spanish Inquisition—monkish robes of black, white, or purple—and on their heads tall conical hoods which come down over their faces. Only their eyes are visible through tiny eyelet-holes. As we went, between one and two in the morning, to the Church of San Lorenzo we saw many of these strange, sinister-looking figures flitting about. The streets were full of people. Wine-shops and cafés were still open. Tobacco shops were doing a brisk trade. In the square before the church there was a crowd already, and it grew larger every moment. Two o'clock is the hour at which the procession comes forth from San Lorenzo, bearing the image of 'Jesus of great power,' the most famous of all. The crowd was lively, even noisy. It chattered and joked as crowds do. When two o'clock struck and the lights were extinguished there were cat-calls for the doors to open. In a few moments they slowly swung back and the 'penitents,' each carrying a lighted candle, began to stream through.

Above the heads of the crowd I could see only their pointed hoods and the yellow patches which their candles made against the darkness. But when the platform with the image was borne forth it could be seen plainly by all. A silence fell upon the people. Every hat was taken off. Women bowed their heads. Suddenly the silence was torn by a voice—a voice metallic, unmelodious, but wonderfully flexible. It sang a hymn in praise of the Saviour, to a melody that was unmistakably Moorish—a florid yet monotonous Arab chant. It is the custom to welcome the images with these traditional airs. Well-known singers are engaged to sing them at certain points; at other points they are sung by unknown people in the crowd.

The singing relieved the tension. Talk and laughter began again. The image moved on and the crowd broke up. A rush was made for the Plaza de la Constitución, where stands are put up and seats sold at high prices, from which all the processions can be seen. That night there were six, each with two platforms. The groups represented scenes from the Passion, and there were several famous Virgins, dressed in magnificent robes of gold brocade and covered with jewels—not paste and tinsel, but the real thing. Diamonds glittered on the necks and stomachers of these figures. Rings adorned their fingers. Bracelets, given in gratitude for prayers answered, hung on their wrists. Their value runs into hundreds of thousands of pounds.

It was just on three when we took our seats in the Plaza. Boys were shouting programmes and caramels. There was a cheerful buzz of talk and laughter. One cheeky urchin lit his stump of cigar at a penitent's candle. No one was shocked. Two youngsters, who might have sat as models to Murillo, played and squabbled just opposite us all the night. It was luckily not cold, for we sat there until five a.m., and even then the images had not all passed. They are a great weight, and

they are still carried as they were in the days when Spain ruled the sea, by men who shuffle along supporting the platforms on the backs of their necks. These men, sometimes twenty, sometimes as many as forty in number, are hidden from view by the valance of the platform. They cannot go far at a time. Frequent stops are necessary. They give their burdens a curious jerky movement, like that of huge insects with innumerable legs.

\* \* \* \* \*

The penitents' costumes are, many of them, most effective. Each brotherhood, composed of men and women both, of all degrees, has its own cross and banner, and blazons its device upon the robes of its members. There were several tiny children toddling along, rather wearily, poor mites. I was not far from weary myself, when I decided that I had had enough. But no one else seemed to be going home. I misquoted Wordsworth, 'Dear God, the very houses seem awake.' I fell asleep with the sound of the bands which march with the processions and the metallic voices chanting Arab melodies still in my ears.

On Good Friday I sat another five hours, from six until eleven in the evening, to watch more 'Cofradias' pass by. This time the seats in the Plaza were quite full. The mayor and town councillors were in their box, not paying very much attention, smoking innumerable cigarettes. The daylight faded as the cloaked and hooded figures moved interminably on. The moon lent Seville's famous tower, the Giralda, a fairy far-off loveliness. The scenes of the Passion came to an end. Last of all came Death, a grisly figure, triumphing at the foot of the Cross. But only for the moment. Next morning in the cathedral we celebrated Death's discomfiture. The veil which had hidden the altar screen all Passion Week was lifted. The golden bells clanged joyously. The great organ filled the whole church with the glorious harmonies of faith and thankfulness.



## THE CORONATION OF KING GEORGE V

BY RALPH DAVID BLUMENFELD

From the *Daily Express*, June 23, 1911

*Ralph David Blumenfeld gave me my first job and taught me all I know of the journalistic craft. He was born in Watertown, Wisconsin, but he has lived and worked in England for so many years that he has become the greatest Britisher of us all. In his early youth he wrote a book called An exile in England. If he went back to his native home now, he would certainly be an exile in America. Had he not elected to be an editor, he would have been a famous descriptive writer. A very gifted man, and a man of infinite humour and friendliness.*

THE Coronation cannot be described. It is a thing impossible, and too vast, too magnificent, too mystic, and too solemn for written sentences. It cannot be done; and what I am about to relate here is merely the impressionistic story of many pageants seen from a favourable corner in Westminster Abbey during seven of the most astonishing hours of my life; my eyes surfeited with historical colour and motion and my ears sated with music. I was physically exhausted with the long vigil, yet I knew it not, for my brain was ablaze with pictures that it had recorded and my mind bewildered with the mediaeval splendour of the thing. I cannot even now, after the event, piece together the cyclone of emotions that raged within me, for as I try I merely conjure up pageant after pageant, colour upon colour, one more wonderful than the other. I have seen many sights in my life. I have seen kings crowned before, I have seen royal weddings and royal funerals and great processions without losing control over my perspective. So I entered Westminster Abbey at seven

o'clock in the morning, more with the air of doing my duty with eyes, ears and pen, than seeing and hearing for my own personal interpretation. And I came out at two in the afternoon—dazed with the glory of it.

Westminster Abbey is built in the form of a cross. From the western entrance, before which a temporary annex has been built, stretches the nave, open to a point just short of the spreading arms of the cross, where a great carved oaken screen hides the choir, in which the Coronation took place. On either side of this long, blue-carpeted aisle, between the thousand-year-old pillars and the walls, rose immense blue-clothed stands, tier upon tier, holding the minor guests. In the choir, in the stalls of the canon and clergy, sat the foreign royalties and representatives of other countries. In the arms of the cross were the peers and peeresses, and above them, rising almost to the roof, the tiers of seats crowded with the members of the House of Commons and their women folk. Over the choir were galleries for notabilities. In the centre was the 'theatre,' where the ceremonies were performed. Here was the altar. Facing it, some fifteen yards away, stood the ancient Throne of St. Edward. Under its wooden seat rests the Liagh-fail, the Stone of Mystery, the Stone of Fate and of Fortune, torn from the lamenting Scots by Edward Longshanks from the Abbey of Scone centuries ago. Its history before then runs back to the myth world. Every King and Queen of England has been crowned on it in the course of ages. Behind this throne were two smaller ones on a dais, one for the King and another for the Queen. Faldstools for prayer stood in front of them. On the right, in front of the tomb of Anne of Cleves, one of Henry VIII's wives, were two thrones for the preparatory service, and just behind them and over the tomb a box for the members of the royal family. The altar was filled with golden flagons, patens, chalices and cups.

Thus the setting of the stage. At seven in the morning, as I took up my place in the triforium directly over the thrones, and with a full view of the transepts, choir and nave, the Abbey already glowed with animation and colour: peers in their robes, carrying their coronets; peeresses, princesses, generals, admirals, bishops, knights of the various orders in great flowing mantles on which was embroidered the insignia of the order, each with different coloured robes and embroidery; 'honourable gentlemen' of the King's Body Guard, Yeomen of the Guard, Lords-Lieutenant, Deputy-Lieutenants looking like Field-Marsals of a century ago, Royal Ushers of Scotland, Privy Councillors in silver panniers and white silken knee breeches, Life Guards officers, provincial mayors with their gold chains of office round their necks—some of these chains as old as the Abbey itself—dragoons, hussars, lancers, yeomanry, colonels, men in shakos, men in busbies, men in silver, gold, brass, and jet helmets, men with spears and men with halberds, priests in red, in white, in gold, choir-boys in surplices, all marshalled to their places by officers in regimental uniform or men in levee dress carrying red staves with golden tops. There was no confusion. Every seat was numbered, every section had a gold staff usher to look after it. Even at that early hour the scene was wonderful. A great picture was being painted as if by a master hand. Here a dash of colour, there a red splash, there a purple and here a white. Quickly the spaces were brushed in by the invisible hand, rapidly, almost feverishly, until at last the framework was filled in and there lay before me a glowing, living picture such as perhaps the world has never seen before. By eight o'clock the dim old Abbey looked like a vast flower garden that had been arranged by a master gardener, an artist in formality and colour. The peeresses sat together in the south transept, a great square of living colour like a patch of lilies. Above them the Commons in all the uniforms of imagination,

with their wives in white and cream and gold. On the other side the crimson-robed peers, showing underneath the gold and silver and white of their court clothing. Above them again the other half of the Commons in all the uniform that imagination can conjure up—levee dress, militia, territorial, regular army and navy, lieutenancy, ushers, King's Counsel, and ministerial. In the theatre itself, close by the thrones, a splash of purple and white made up of thirty or more bishops huddled closely together as is their wont; great men, these, superior to the civil authorities as from early days; some of them in golden copes. In the galleries above the choir, a great concourse of exalted people. The colours stunned the eye. Nothing approached the amazing glory of the Indian princes. There was such a cyclone of colour that the eye grew wearied and sought rest along the pure white surplices of the great choir, who looked like a thousand angels in their eyrie. Away down the long aisle the living garden stretched itself. I could look over and across the screen on which were perched the musicians. Westminster Abbey is a home of the great dead, a palace of tombs and monuments. Not one was visible, the dead great were hidden by the splendid living.

We had many hours to wait before the royal procession was to leave Buckingham Palace on its way through the crowded flag-bedecked streets. But in the meantime there was procession upon procession, pageant upon pageant in the Abbey. Here a little procession of priests and choir-boys; there a company of mediaeval Yeomen of the Guard, marching noiselessly to a given point over the blue carpet; again a group of field-m Marshals, generals and admirals, the King's chief equerries, just arrived, and striding proudly to the seat all gold and silver and swords and waving plumes, here a group of peeresses marshalled in by equally gorgeous officers all of them fresh from their river pageant—an old method of transit to Westminster renewed for the occasion. At nine

o'clock there came from behind the altar the first sign that the day's programme had begun. Two priests in red copes appeared. Then a great processional cross—the gift of an Abyssinian Ras—and following this a long double line of clergy, choir-boys. Behind these were the scholars of Westminster School, one of the ancient foundations whose boys have the prescriptive right to cheer in the Abbey; a privilege of which they availed themselves this day to the full. In the middle of this procession was the Dean of Westminster. He is a great personage. He is only a Dean, yet he makes no obeisance to any Bishop, and does not even place himself under the jurisdiction of his Grace of Canterbury. He is the only one of the old mitred abbots left in actual possession of an Abbey, and he reports direct to the King. It is fitting, therefore, that the Dean of Westminster should be a great man; and he is. The present Dean was until a few months ago the Bishop of Winchester, who is the senior bishop next to the primates. Yet Dr. Ryle exchanged his Bishop's see for the mitre of the Abbot. For this Coronation Day he turned over his Abbey to the Earl Marshal, who in his turn handed it over to the Archbishop of Canterbury. But even then the Dean shared with the Primate the principal honours of the Coronation.

The little procession just emerged from behind the altar came out of St. Edward's Chapel. It carried the Regalia. Five silver trumpets blowing mellow-toned fanfares preceded the little procession—now joined by three bishops in golden copes—as it marched down the aisle.

Now came another little pageant full of animation and colour, marking the entry of the foreign representatives. At their head walked the Crown Prince of Germany, slight, straight, fair-haired, blue-eyed—Prussian from his jack-boots to his silver helmet with the eagle atop of it. Over his shoulders he carried, and with an undoubted swagger, too, the blue mantle of a Knight of the Garter. He played his part well, as

becomes the son of a picturesque Emperor. By his side was his wife, afire with jewels and orders. Behind them came Prince Fushimi of Japan with his princess, a stark contrast to the Imperial German couple; and the Austrian Grand Duke, just beginning to pride himself in a budding moustache. He was a poem in sky-blue and silver, and he, too, carried a Knight's robe; following came the Duke of Aosta, brother of Italy's King, a fine type of Savoyard; a Russian Grand Duke; a Chinese prince attended by a dignitary styled 'Manchu Brigadier'; a Spanish prince; the Crown Princes of Sweden, of Denmark, of Belgium; the great bulky Prince Consort of the Netherlands, German written all over him; a coal-black Ethiopian from Abyssinia, barbaric in splendour, with an explosion of great green feathers from his headpiece; a host of republican envoys, those from South America leading the rest in point of bullion and tassels and silver braid; and finally Mr. John Hays Hammond, glaringly conspicuous, almost flaunting the simplicity of American official dress with his white shirt front and absence of decoration. This procession was led up the aisle by the two pursuivants, Rouge Dragon and Portcullis, who might have come straight from the Field of the Cloth of Gold or stepped out of the tilting lists at Ashby-de-la-Zouche or Poitiers. They heralded the great ones to their places in the choir-stalls, where, with a great rattling of sabres and handing up of long silken trains, they sat down and added another patch of colour to the great Abbey. The scene was overpowering in its magnificence. Kipling says: 'It's the colour that gets into your throat.' It was so here. You could not sit still undreaming. You were taken out of the world. You just sat up there in the triforium and looked at the most wonderful picture-book of life and history and saga that had ever been placed before human eyes; and you just sat there dreaming, dreaming and thinking. Down below there were the representatives of the world's

power and the leaders of thought and action and force. Beneath them in their tombs thousands of England's heroes of a thousand battles, its kings and queens, its poets, its statesmen. There you saw a little brown woman in a thin veil, a magnificent crown on her head and a gorgeous British officer by her side. She is the Begum of Bhopal, an Indian ruler entitled to a salute of twelve guns from a British battery; and there you perceive Togo, the Japanese sea hero, swathed in decorations, conspicuous among them the coveted British Order of Merit, and beside him Nogi, the man who stormed and stormed and stormed Port Arthur, losing his two sons in the campaign; the Speaker of the House of Commons in his robes of sable and gold, which Velasquez would have loved to paint, and the great golden mace (which so troubled Cromwell) carried before him. 'Honest John' Morley, now a Viscount—'Honest John,' the republican, robed in silk and velvet and a page-boy carrying his coronet; another 'Honest John,' the Right Honourable John Burns, in silver-coloured Privy Councillor's garb, all shimmering and beautiful, with his sturdy wife, who keeps no servants, sitting beside him with nodding white plume from her well-dressed hair—these two who are no longer the idols of the proletariat; the Earl Marshal, Duke of Norfolk, chief stage manager of the Coronation, with the blue ribbon of the Garter flung over his brilliant coat, a white ivory staff in his hand—this great Duke, who ordinarily looks like a bearded undertaker, but now shines like a blazoned butterfly; Madame Melba, a special guest; a posy of Indian princes in a delirium of colours and jewels; a box full of foreign officers attending their princes, making one wonder where all these medals can have come from; Sir Evelyn Wood, the ever-youthful Field-Marshal, who twice won the Victoria Cross for bravery in wars half a century ago; Mr. Balfour and Mr. Kipling, the former in uniform, the latter grandly plain in morning dress.

You were suddenly pulled out of dreamland by the sound of silver trumpets announcing another pageant, and as you looked down the aisle you saw it approaching, led again by the heralds from the Field of the Cloth of Gold. It was the procession of the Royal Family, headed by the Prince of Wales. The Prince came upon the Abbey as a surprise. You had expected him—a mere child—to come in his familiar uniform of a naval cadet. But here came a Knight of the Garter in flowing robes, carrying his great plumed hat on his left arm, as did the Knights of old their helmets. He strode up with the majesty and pomp that belong to princes, no longer a child, but a young man, erect, firm, blue-eyed. A lord carried his train, another his coronet. Behind the prince came his brothers and sister, his aunts and cousins and relations, their trains covering the wide blue carpet as they swept to their places. It was a pretty picture. The colours changed from billow of silver to billow of gold and from gold to silver again with tints and rose and blue.

Presently all was silent; so silent that the six thousand people were as statues. From without came the sound of clanging bells and distant cheering like breakers on a far-off cliff. Then in a few minutes at the western entrance appeared a long double line of scarlet-coped clergy. Behind them the peers carrying the Regalia; the Duke of Devonshire, the head of the Cavendishes, with a pillow on which rested the Queen's crown, the famous Koh-i-noor diamond sparkling in its top like a living thing; the King's standard-bearers, among them Lord Curzon, growing portly and middle-aged; Lord Aberdeen; and the O'Connor Don, an Irish descendant of kings; the King's Champion; the four Knights of the Garter in close attendance on his Majesty—Lords Rosebery, Crewe, Minto and Cadogan—Lord Rosebery now metamorphosed into the picturesque Earl of Midlothian; his son-in-law, Crewe, newly made a Marquis; Earl Minto, fresh from the



Viceregal chair of India; and Earl Cadogan, the greatest ground landlord in London. Then more great officers of state. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidon, himself the son-in-law of an archbishop, and Cosmo Lang, Archbishop of York, were attired in golden copes with jewelled clasps. Canterbury is a courtier, popular, wise, conciliatory, with years of experience in the charmed circle of princes. York is a young man in the early forties, strong, firm, crafty—a mediaeval bishop with the face of a militant churchman, a statesman and tactician only recently lifted, as if by an explosion, from the humble surroundings of an East End parish. He is a great man. If he had lived in Tudor days, he would have rivalled Wolsey. Then came the Lord Mayor with his mace—John Bull with a robe and chain, John Bull straight from the counting-house, John Bull soliciting orders. He held his mace apologetically, as if to conciliate the great assemblage for his intrusion here.

On came the cataract of red, green, blue, yellow, purple, scarlet and white, controlled by a hand unseen, yet sure and irresistible.

And then—the Queen. She walked alone, or seemed to walk alone, for her long purple train reached many yards behind her. On each side of the train were four young girls in pure white, and at the end the Mistress of the Robes, the Duchess of Devonshire, herself leading a long train held up in turn by a delightful page-boy in silks, satins and ruffles. On either side of the blue carpet walked five gentlemen-at-arms in scarlet tunics and waving white plumes. Close by, two bishops. In the centre was the Queen, stately, dignified, head high. Her great robe was embroidered with the floral emblems of Empire—the Rose, the Thistle, the Shamrock, the Wattle, the Maple Leaf, and so on. It was a floating vision of satin, pearl and lace. It was like Keats's golden lilies scattered and gleaming on the surface of the lake of

wine. And then followed a dazzling retinue of the women of the bedchamber, maids of honour, ladies-in-waiting, and peeresses, in such a glory of gold and cream and white that their mistress seemed to be borne forward in a sunset cloud.

The flashing wave of magnificence with the Queen at the head reached the central stage by the altar. The choir was singing softly, when suddenly, unexpectedly, came the swift, sharp, almost wolf-like shouts of the Westminster boys exercising their ancient privilege.

'Vivat!' they shouted, 'Vivat Regina Marial Vivat, Vivat, Vivat!' in a sharp, accentuated crescendo.

The shouts broke into the mid-symphony of the music and pageant like claps of thunder and shafts of lightning. The Queen stopped for a second, and half turned. It held her as it did the other six thousand hearts in the old Abbey, unused to such interruption. Then the Queen and her retinue sat down and waited—the Queen taking her place on one of the minor thrones at the side—waited for the coming of the King.

Presently he came with his escort of knights and bishops and heralds, only more of them than before—Richmond herald, Rouge Croix, Bluemantle, Lyon, Ulster, Clarenceux, Norroy, and leading them Sir Arthur Scott-Gatty, the songwriter, metamorphosed into Garter King-of-Arms; all of them as if they had stepped out of their playing cards or a Froissart volume, with tabards before them. The Lord Great Chamberlain, the High Constables of England and Scotland, dukes and marquises, bishops, prelates, a cyclorama of cloth of gold and—the King. Again the Westminster boys shouted, 'Vivat Rex Georgius! Vivat, Vivat, Vivat!' The music surged and the Sovereign walked forward in purple and ermine, the velvet cap of state on his head.

The Primate cried out:

Sirs: I here present unto you King George, the undoubted King of the Realm. Therefore, all you who are come this day to do your homage and service, are you willing to do the same?

Swift came the response: 'God save King George! God save King George!' It rolled through the length and breadth of the Abbey. . . . I pass over the order of the ritual, which has so often been fully described.

Anointed and crowned, vested in golden light, sceptred in the right hand and left, the King was taken from the Chair of Destiny to his blazoned throne on the dais to receive the homage. The Archbishop first. He knelt before his Sovereign, and then, rising, placed a finger on the crown and kissed the King on the left cheek. Then stepped forward the Prince of Wales. He swept aside his robes of the Garter as he came up the few steps before the Throne. He followed the prescribed order. He touched the crown and kissed the King's cheek and stepped back to retire. But the father reached out and drew his son to him and kissed him; and the boy, covered with confusion, bent down, kissed his father's hand, and retired hurriedly.

The Queen's Coronation was short and simple, but exceedingly impressive. Instead of Knights of the Garter to hold the golden canopy for the anointing, there were four resplendent duchesses. The crown, with its flashing Koh-i-noor, was placed on her head, and as this was done all the peeresses in the Abbey put on their coronets. Then, returning from the altar, she passed the King, bowing low with womanly dignity, and ascended her throne beside the dais.

The ceremony in the Abbey was over, and the priests and the bishops took the royal couple back to St. Edward's Chapel, whence they emerged in half an hour with their crowns on their heads, their brilliant retinue following. The National Anthem was played as they strode down the aisle,

the Westminster boys cheered three times for the King, three times for the Queen, three times for the Prince of Wales. The six thousand princes, dukes, peers, peeresses, generals, admirals and commoners rubbed their eyes and stretched their legs. The dream was over.

Outside the bells clanged and sang. Cannon roared. Millions of voices took up the cry. The golden chariot wended its way through the lanes made by human beings roaring, shouting, and weeping.

As I came out of the Abbey through the cloisters into Dean's Yard, an ancient quadrangle where the Middle Ages still live and where the silence of a bygone age hovered in the shades of the trees, a gold-maced beadle, who had stood guard for hours, approached me, and asked anxiously, 'Is it all over?'

## AMERICAN WINS THE MARATHON

BY SIR PERCIVAL PHILLIPS

From the *Daily Express*, July 25th, 1908

*Percival Phillips and I were for many years colleagues in the Daily Express office. He was born in Pittsburg, and when little more than a boy he was sent to Europe by an American newspaper to describe one of the many small Balkan wars. Since then Phillips has seen more fighting as well as more of the world than any other living journalist. He is a dispassionate observer with very clear vision and absolutely no prejudice or passion. He was at G.H.Q. from the beginning of the war to the Armistice. He left the Express for the Mail soon after the Peace, thus reversing what fifteen years before had been a somewhat regular journey.*

A GAUNT little man with burning eyes and livid features streaked with dust and perspiration staggered down the track towards the winning post at the Stadium yesterday afternoon.

Around the arena 80,000 spectators encouraged him with strangely choked cheers.

Five times the little man sank from sheer exhaustion during that terrible journey round three-quarters of the amphitheatre. Five times he rallied and tried to reach the goal, with a competitor almost at his heels. He was finally hauled across the tape, more dead than alive, only to lose the victory for which he had struggled so hard.

Such was the finish of the Marathon Race—a finish so unexpectedly tragic and dramatic that it gripped at the heart of every human being in that vast assemblage.

Eighty thousand people had waited patiently to cheer the winner of this, the greatest event in the Olympic Games, peering with tense, expectant faces at the entrance to the arena, where he was to make his triumphal entry.

They expected nothing more exciting than a short sharp spurt by a somewhat tired runner, who would eventually be followed by other tired runners. No one was prepared for the pitiful figure, that looked more like a corpse than a living man, stumbling blindly—almost unconsciously—along the path between two guides, trying bravely to respond to the pitying cheers from the tiers of humanity above him, and lash his tired body into one last effort.

#### BITTER DEFEAT

Surely no man ever found defeat more bitter than Pietro Dorando, the twenty-two-year-old Milanese, as he lay outstretched on the track, with the winning tape almost within reach of his hand, and realised that the greatest of Olympic victories was slipping away. He reached the tape, it is true, but he could not do it unassisted, and so the race went to Hayes, the American, who followed Dorando so closely and so pluckily.

In many respects it was the greatest and most memorable

race in the history of British athletics. There may have been a greater number of people gathered together to witness a football match, but never such a large concourse of representative people.

Fully 20,000 people applied for admission to the Stadium too late. There was not a vacant seat. In the cheaper sections patient sightseers were wedged together like sardines. The shilling spectators endured the greatest discomfort with the greatest good-nature. Late-comers stood three and four deep in the blazing sunshine waiting for more than two hours to see the Marathon victor.

Although he was not due until after five o'clock, the Stadium was well filled at two. An hour later people were being turned away. Ten thousand disappointed ones sought refuge in the exhibition, and others lined the route to the amphitheatre. Some offered as much as a sovereign for half-a-crown seat. An army of motor cars filled all the adjacent space.

It was a wonderful picture viewed from the arena. The women were in light summer costume, and the general effect of black and white was brightened here and there by a red or blue silk parasol.

In one section a group of Swedish naval officers in dark uniforms contributed a splash of blue to the picture. At the other end were fifty or more young girls from a boarding school. In their usual position opposite the royal box sat the American competitors and their friends, the men were for the most part in their shirt-sleeves, for flag-waving and 'ra-ra-ning' are hard work on a hot summer's day.

It was apparent from the beginning of the afternoon that many of the eighty thousand spectators were only mildly interested in the events preceding the Marathon climax. True every victory was roundly cheered, but the Marathon bulletins were cheered even more, and as the afternoon

shadows lengthened enthusiasm in current events became more and more perfunctory.

The City Toastmaster, who graces the Guildhall banquets, enlivened the proceedings with a bright red swallow-tailed coat and tophat and a megaphone. He was dignified and properly dramatic, with a nice appreciation of the climax which was awaited so eagerly. The anxious thousands watched his scarlet coat lovingly as he travelled backwards and forwards across the green transmitting messages from the distant runners.

It was 3.40 when the first bulletin arrived. The runners were four miles out, and all three leading competitors were British. The packed crowd settled back exultantly and returned its attention to the high divers. A little later came the nine-mile bulletin: Lord and Price, of Great Britain, and Hefferon, the South African, held the lead. Happy cheers as the result was paraded up and down the arena.

#### THE QUEEN'S ARRIVAL

Two motor-cars and a landau drove up to the royal box. Queen Alexandra appeared, with her Princess Victoria and the Duke of Sparta and a numerous suite. Twenty minutes past four. Another bulletin: the same runners led.

The arena hummed with activity. Lithe young men were wrestling on a mat near the swimming tank, although few people seemed to notice them. Half-a-dozen swimmers splashed up and down the tank, to the obvious envy of many persons on the shadeless benches. Then the final heats in the 1,600 metres relay race were run, and diverted the crowd for a brief space.

Nevertheless, they kept one eye on the man with the megaphone. He surprised them somewhat about a quarter to five. Hefferon, the South African, was leading at the nineteenth mile post: Dorando, the Italian, was second: Appleby (Great

Britain) third. The Italian second, and seven more miles to run.

Ten minutes later there was still another surprise, the transplanted toastmaster announced that Hefferon still led, with Dorando second and Hayes, the American, third, at the twentieth mile. The Stadium fairly hummed with pent-up excitement when the megaphone announced almost immediately afterwards: 'Clear the course for the Marathon Race!'

Every one could feel the tension in the air. Every one began to watch, almost instinctively, the entrance to the arena opposite the royal box and on the left of the busy band of the 2nd Life Guards, where ropes had been stretched and policemen were taking up their positions.

At 5.25 the megaphone swung towards the royal box and announced triumphantly: 'The runners are in sight; South Africa and Italy are still leading!'

A gun boomed in the distance. 'Hush, Hush!' repeated the spectators to each other. It was half whispered, but it went right round the Stadium, and the sea of humanity suddenly became very still. Men were gripping their field-glasses nervously; women stood up in their seats. The silence was more impressive than the thunderous cheer that preceded it.

#### THE TRAGEDY

Three or four men came quickly through the open entrance; the crowd sighed and was still again. They were only officials. Then another knot of men, with green bands on their hats. They turned to look behind them, and the spectators caught their breath. The little lane suddenly widened as the constables swung back. An inspector of police ran forward, waved his hand and disappeared.

And then——

He staggered into that vast amphitheatre a shrunken, pitiful figure of a man, dazed, blind, speechless—apparently



dying. As he stopped for the space of a second, as though not knowing which way to turn, the spectators shivered. The vast audience quivered as though it had been struck.

This was not the triumphant victor they had so eagerly awaited. As this wreck of a man, who seemed to carry the mark of death in the very droop of his shoulders, was not what they expected. Should they cheer? Dare they cheer?

For a second that seemed an eternity they hesitated. A woman beside me sobbed, 'They have killed him!' Then they did cheer, with voices that trembled in a new way. If it is possible to raise a cheer with tears in it, the eighty thousand people who sat in the Stadium yesterday afternoon did so.

The pitiful figure stumbling along, in the centre of a confused group of men, heard it. He lifted his head. What was passing in his mind no one will ever know. It seemed to those who could see his agonised face that he suddenly aroused from mental as well as physical collapse. Perhaps his response was only mechanical.

But he tried to sprint. It was horrible, it was grotesque. The man seemed sinking down on his heels. His nerveless arms dangled at his sides. His legs, in the red 'shorts' seemed like the legs of a puppet. For nearly a hundred yards he kept up this sprint which was not faster than a walk. All the while he settled down on his heels.

#### COLLAPSE

Suddenly he sank in a heap. No one seemed surprised. It did not seem possible that he would ever move again. But anxious friends were bending over him. There was frantic entreaty in their very gestures. The dumb show could be seen on the other side of the arena. Everyone knew what it meant.

Queen Alexandra and the other royal spectators rose from their seats and stood at the railing, watching breathlessly.

Dorando slowly rose upright and tried to continue his journey. The men around him were cheering him, imploring him. Two constables, following behind, pushed away other men who tried to approach.

In a moment he was down again. The same entreaty and persuasion. Again he rose, and this time he staggered blindly half-way round the end of the oval. Again he collapsed, and this time he lay outstretched on the track. One man rubbed his head. Another elevated his heels and chafed his limbs. All the while the crowd cheered spasmodically, a little hysterically. I saw more than one woman who averted her face and would not look at the spectacle.

A new note in the cheering. Another runner entered the Stadium. An American. The word passed like lightning as the Stars and Stripes on his vest stood out in the sunshine. The American competitors' section, watching the resuscitation of Dorando with sympathetic interest, turned as one man and were galvanised into action.

They sprang to their feet and shrieked ecstatically, 'Hayes!' they shouted, 'It's Hayes! Go it, Hayes, if you love us! Oh, go it!'

The American was a welcome relief. He was a short, sturdy young man, who ran in a steady dogged fashion. He was obviously in good condition. He came steadily down the track past the frenzied faces of his countrymen. Of the forest of flags and volleys of imploring yells he took no notice. He must have seen that the Italian had collapsed, yet he did not quicken his pace in the slightest.

#### LAST EFFORT

Dorando had been on his back for at least a minute. He heard the new note in the cheering; his friends helped him up again; he was off. For the last time he made an effort really to run. But it was still merely a feeble, nerveless walk—the ghost

of a sprint—so slow that the short steady pace of the man on the other side of the arena seemed rapid by comparison.

The feelings of the spectators are beyond description. They saw the Italian, now on the home stretch and only a short distance from the goal, going slower and slower, like a mechanical doll, suddenly run down, and his rival gaining steadily every second.

Was Dorando to have victory snatched from him in this heart-breaking fashion, within a few feet of the goal? It seemed too bad. Yes, he was down again, and this time his collapse had the suggestion of absolute despair.

'Hayes! Hayes! Hayes!' chanted the Americans. The crowd cheered again, more hysterically than before. They did not know whom they were cheering for—that is, the majority of them. It was too bewildering.

'He's up again!' shouted a man through a megaphone to no one in particular. Dorando was supposed to be on his feet, but he shuffled along so slowly and limply that it was impossible for any one in the stands to tell whether he was actually in the race or merely being assisted to the stretcher that awaited him just beyond the tape.

But he must have been unassisted, for he collapsed again, now within a very few feet of the line. It seemed brutal—even impossible—to worry him any longer. Yet again he took the semblance of being upright—the men around him closed in—there was a rush—a cheer from the Italians. He was over the line!

He collapsed into the stretcher awaiting him; it seemed that he must be dead. The Queen from the balcony above watched him with pitying eyes. They carried him off the field.

Another mighty roar from the crowd. Hayes was on the home stretch. Delirious compatriots cheered him down the track; he crossed the line. It was over!

## THE PLACED MEN

An American victory seemed not the least surprising incident of that dramatic quarter of an hour. Scarcely had the spectators time to digest it when a third runner, clad in green, darted through the police and swung down the track. It was Hefferon, the South African.

But the American honours were not complete. Again the Stars and Stripes were seen as a fourth runner was ushered into the Stadium with cheers. A megaphone in the 'Yankee' stand introduced him as 'Good old Forshaw,' and he raced home with marked freshness. The next and fifth arrival was likewise an American—Welton.

Canada got the next honours, and Wood, Simpson, the Red Indian, and Lawson followed each other in rapid succession. Simpson in his white linen sun hat and steady trot looked a typical 'redskin.'

By this time the assemblage was breaking up. Runners were still arriving, but the great interest had passed. There was a wild rush for tubes, trams and taxicabs. Everyone was tired, but good-natured—and just a little dazed. The last half-hour had been too much for them.

As they passed out, every person in that vast throng had in his or her mind the never-to-be-forgotten picture of the victor who was not a victor—the forlorn little man who nearly killed himself while trying to show that he was a good sportsman.

## VOICE OF POTSDAM AT VERSAILLES

BY SIDNEY DARK, *Daily Express* Special CorrespondentFrom the *Daily Express*

*This description of the handing of the peace terms at the Trianon Palace Hotel, Versailles, was despatched to London within two hours of the closing of the sitting.*

FROM THE PEACE CHAMBER,  
VERSAILLES, May 7, 1919.

'MESSIEURS les plénipotentiaires Allemands.' It was exactly seven minutes past three this afternoon when the white-haired, dignified Foreign Office usher introduced the representatives of beaten Germany to the Allied plenipotentiaries in the salon of the Trianon Palace Hotel at Versailles. Everyone rose as the Germans came into the room. They stood for a moment in the doorway, bowed formally to left and right, and then took their allotted places.

The entrance was extraordinarily dramatic in its very lack of colour and pomp, and nine-tenths of the drama was written on the face of Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau. His thin, rather menacing countenance was ghastly white, and as one looked at him one remembered that he at least belongs by birth to the Germany of the Junkers, and that he was here at Versailles to admit that this Germany was beaten and destroyed. To his right sat Herr Landsberg, fiercely red-bearded; Herr Leinert, pleasantly good-looking, and the inconspicuous Dr. Schücking. On Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau's left sat Herr Giesberts, a typically fat German; and Professor Melchior, whose thin face reminded one irresistibly of a weasel.

## 97,000 WORDS

At half-past two copies of the treaty arrived in large bundles, and were distributed round the tables with the exception of the German table. It is on thick white paper, considerably curtailed during the many revisions, and contains now, I am told, 97,000 words.

One small and rather interesting point is that the places at the tables were reserved for nations and not for individuals, and that the only place which had an individual name written on it was that of Marshal Foch.

At ten minutes to three M. Clemenceau led the main body of the delegates into the room, Signor Orlando and Baron Sonnino being among them. M. Paderewski arrived last at exactly three. Mr. Wilson took his place on M. Clemenceau's right; next to him were Mr. Lansing, Mr. White, Colonel House, and General Bliss. Then came the French delegates, who included Marshal Foch, and then the Italians, who were represented by three instead of five delegates. Next to the two empty chairs were the Belgians and Brazilians.

Mr. Lloyd George sat on M. Clemenceau's left, with Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Barnes, Sir Joseph Ward, Sir Robert Borden, Mr. Hughes, and Mr. Massey.

The Germans took their places; there was a moment's pause, and M. Clemenceau rose, as usual wearing grey gloves. He was entirely composed, but looked sterner than he generally looks, and he spoke with incisive emphasis. His speech only lasted three or four minutes, and I felt sure as I listened to him that, as he stood speaking across the room, straight at the German delegates, he was thinking of all that France had suffered in 1870, and how Germany was now paying in 1919. The little old man never took his eyes from Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau's face during his short speech. There was a touch of anger in his references to the cruelties of the war;

there was more than a touch of irony in the tone in which he referred to 'The Second Treaty of Versailles.' He finished, threw himself back in his chair, as he always does, and, turning round to the interpreters, said sharply, 'Traduisez-le.'

#### TREATY HANDED OVER

Captain Montoux repeated the speech in English, and an artillery officer translated it into German. During the translation M. Dutasta walked up the room, bowed to Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau and handed him a copy of the treaty.

As soon as the translations were finished, M. Clemenceau rose again and asked if anyone desired to speak. Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau held his hand up like a boy at school.

'La parole passe à Monsieur le Comte de Brockdorff-Rantzau,' said the French Prime Minister. It was now twenty-three minutes past, and the chief German delegate began his carefully prepared oration which, with studied Teutonic insolence, he delivered sitting down. The whole thing had been rehearsed. Two German interpreters jumped up and stood behind the Count and translated sentence by sentence, one of them in rather pleasant French, the other a curious-looking individual with glasses and lanky hair, in most pronounced Middle-West American.

The effect was extraordinary. Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau barked out his sentences like a German drill-sergeant; then came the low French, and then the nasal English, sentence by sentence for over half-an-hour. After the speech had lasted a few minutes M. Clemenceau insisted that the German interpreters should come to the other end of the room, where he could hear them better.

The matter of the speech was in striking contrast to its manner. His appeal to the idealism of President Wilson and to the Socialists of Europe was, as I have said, spoken in rasping barks. The words were perhaps the words of Scheidemann, but the voice was unquestionably the voice of Potsdam.

I was watching Marshal Foch's face as Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau was speaking. The great soldier never looked once at the speaker. His face was immobile, but he bit at the corners of his moustache now and again and fidgeted with his papers, and it was easy to believe that he was wondering whether he would be needed again before Europe would be really safe from the Teuton peril.

The speech ended just before four. M. Clemenceau rose for the third time, and asked if any one had anything to say. Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau, this time standing and bowing to the chair, said that the Germans had nothing to add.

'The sitting is over,' said M. Clemenceau, and then, as the delegates began to move, he sharply added: 'Keep your seats,' and the Allies remained seated until the German plenipotentiaries were ushered out of the room with due ceremony and courtesy, and a great historic hour came to its end.

## CAPTAIN SCOTT'S MEMORIAL SERVICE IN ST. PAUL'S

BY ARTHUR MACHEN

From the *Evening News*, Feb. 14th, 1913

*Arthur Machen, once an actor, has always been a poet. When this dreamy picturesque man with his striking head of hair and his huge pipe became a reporter, most of his friends prophesied a brief and inglorious Fleet Street career. As a matter of fact, his descriptive writing in the Evening News had peculiar charm and individuality, and Fleet Street left him, as it found him, a dreamer and a mystic. This article is a description of the Memorial Service for Captain Scott at St. Paul's.*

HERE a great multitude, there a great solitude.

Here the architecture and the magic of men expressed in stone; here the vast hollow of the dome, lit by the burning



lamps that encircle it; here the choir and the singing voices, and the high altar with the cross.

There the terrible architecture of the Most High God; the peaks and pinnacles of eternal ice, the giant frozen walls, the mountain domes all white for ever that go up into the darkness of the long Polar night.

Here the choir are singing matins, and when they have ended and are gone out of the church, there succeeds that dull murmur that is heard when a great multitude is gathered together, and many of them mutter to one another in undertones. For the great church is full from end to end and the doors are shut.

#### THE TWO CROSSES

There in those waste unhappy fields of snow and desolation there is doubtless the silence of desolation itself; an awful stillness that is unbroken, unless by the more awful voice of the tempest of the South, when the winds of death whirl about that region of terror, and the dark heaven pours forth its clouds of snow.

There is but one thing that binds together St. Paul's Cathedral and that icy wilderness of death down in the far South; one thing which is common to the church and the waste.

In each there is a cross. Here it shines on the altar and is repeated in the marble imagery of the reredos; there it is of plain wood, and it is raised upon a cairn of snow.

For there, indeed, in that far awful region of terror and darkness and solitude as if it were of the places behind the stars, there indeed are buried the bodies of the martyrs of the Antarctic; there rest the bodies of Captain Scott and his most gallant companions, the men who perished in their great quest and high adventure, who would very gladly have laid down their lives for one another.

## THE SYMBOLS AT THE ALTAR

They achieved their quest and triumphed, and on the way home to their dear hearths and to the blissful kisses of those who loved them; on this long white track, as they were journeying, sickness fell upon one and another, and they perished in the tempest, and are glorious for evermore.

It is these things that we are celebrating to-day; this is the text on which we must meditate as we await the stroke of noon.

The scarlet of the Coldstream plays music mournful and yet triumphant; they are lighting the tapers on the altar, and also the two high torches that stand before the altar: there they shine steadfastly, symbols of that light which shines beyond the dark verges of this mortal life, that shone glorious and most fair, a very lamp of paradise, in that utter darkness and black torment of the body in which those brave men died.

The drums of the Guards beat and thunder, their trumpets shake the soul. The western doors are thrown open and the scarlet pageantry of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs enters, and passes up to the choir.

## COMING OF THE KING

The King, in his admiral's uniform, enters; he is here as chief of that navy to which Captain Scott belonged, and Petty Officer Evans also; he is here to mourn for the death of two good officers of his who were 'killed in action'; an action not fought against the weapons of men, but against nature itself and the powers of the waste and the snow.

But the King comes also for all the people of England, of whom he is father and Sovereign; he stands in this place before the altar of God for England and all the whole Empire of the Britains; chief mourner of his people, leading them, as it

were, in thanksgiving for the valour of the dead and in prayers that their souls may dwell in light for ever.

‘THE SHADOW OF DEATH’

The cross—it is truly the very same cross that stands high on the snow-cairn in that bitter, awful wilderness, for there is but one cross—the cross shines high, and the white singing men and boys and the high prelates and dignitaries of the Church come to their places in the choir; and the hymn ‘Rock of Ages’ is sung.

The people all stood up, a vast, dark multitude.

They waited, and looked at one another, for the air was shuddering. The hollow spaces of the dome and choir seemed a-tremble, it was as if something stirred and beat and rustled against the walls: it was a dull, dry murmur, it was as if all the dumb, inarticulate things of the earth strove for speech, and sought an utterance of woe.

But then this strange heart-shaking sound grew louder, then it beat upon our hearts, then it became dreadful as with the beating of iron wings.

THE SUPREME MOMENT

The band of the Coldstream Guards had begun to play the Dead March in ‘Saul.’ Upon the shuddering reverberation of the air beat with a stroke of doom the thunder of the big drum; again and again it was struck as if all hope was stricken there.

But the trumpets and all the brass took up the theme and triumphed, and led it on to the promise of unending victory.

And at the close of the March there sound three faint drum beats. They were very faint; they sounded as if they came from outside the church, as if they came from a far way . . . almost as if they were the drum taps of a little band that set out on the long march that leads from the snow to the stars.

FOR THE SOULS OF THE DEAD

And then the choir sang, and sang as though it were a great harp, the anthem for the Souls of the Dead from the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

Give rest, O Christ, to Thy servants with Thy Saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.

Versicles and Paternoster followed.

After that, the prayers for the dead men, their names being incorporated in the first collect. The priest chanted:

May the Lord in His mercy grant to us, with all the faithful departed, rest and peace. Amen.

And thinking of the tempests of soul and body and spirit through which the dead had passed, remembering the storms that had passed over them, the whole multitude sang at last:

Jesu, Lover of my soul,  
Let me to Thy bosom fly,  
While the gathering waters roll,  
While the tempest still is high:  
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,  
Till the storm of life is past:  
Safe into the haven guide,  
O receive my soul at last.

Then the Benediction.

## THE HORSE SHOW AT OLYMPIA

BY EDITH SHACKLETON

From the *Evening Standard*, June 28th, 1928

*Edith Shackleton, the pen-name of Miss Edith Heald, is one of a family of clever journalists. Her brother, Ivan Heald, who was killed in the war, was a brilliant humorist whose work was a feature of the Daily Express, and her sister is an able editor. Miss Shackleton herself is extraordinarily versatile—theatrical critic, expert paragraphist, and the writer of acute and witty special articles.*

At Olympia the other night, when there came into the arena the proud Spanish horses from Vienna, I remembered how I once envied a child who had refused to believe in Santa Claus the shock he must have had on finding, in the dusk of Christmas morning, a Noah's Ark on his bed, and his small striped socks filled with toy soldiers and walnuts. For these were the horses I had long enjoyed yet never believed in, the horses of Velasquez, the horses that trot, sleek, golden, and untrammelled, above the doorway of San Marco, in Venice—horses that are akin to the best rocking horses of the days before anyone had thought of insulting children's imaginations by 'natural' toys and to the horse on which King Charles rides 'hard by his own Whitehall.'

I had never believed in them before, nor, I am sure, had hundreds of those who will see these short-headed, generously curved creatures, pearly white with grey tinges like the inside of certain shells. I had just stupidly thought that Velasquez and the others had their own notion of a horse and that it was not quite that of the Almighty. And here

come these proud, calm creatures, the direct descendants of the subjects of Velasquez, to prove that he was a realist after all.

Every now and then one gets one of these amusing jolts which fuse imagination and experience and make one feel somehow a little more at home in the material world. It is as though one had got a key to an extra room or been allowed into another garden. Mr. Aldous Huxley touches on the same sensation in a charming little essay which describes his discovery, after years of admiring a certain Patinir landscape as an exquisite feat of imagination, that he was driving through it during a journey from Dinant to Namur, and the credit he had given to Patinir was, in fact, due to God.

Many a native of these Northern islands must have known the same feeling of mingled loss and discovery on a first visit to Italy, when, from the windows of the train taking him, say, from Venice to Florence, he saw the delicately pointed, lavender-coloured hills and finely articulated trees, the pale towers and clear skies he had hitherto assumed to be inventions of fifteenth-century painters as backgrounds for pensive Madonnas and adoring saints.

Indeed, not all of us require to go abroad to get this odd, enchanted feeling of incredible things coming true. I remember a little girl, brought up in the austere North, to whom it had never occurred that the flowery timbered cottages, the oak well-heads, the great hay wains and shingled barns which occurred in her nursery-rhyme books were representations of actual objects. They were just fabulous details of the places where Tom Tucker and Lucy Locket and the others lived, and also the appropriate decorations for night-nursery texts. No nursery-rhyme illustrator ever put these popular characters in the brown stone frowning cottages of the Northern moors, or even in the whitewashed, gardenless cottages of Ulster. Nor has the Society for the Promotion of Christian

Knowledge ever seemed to have thought of printing 'Feed My Lambs' across a Yorkshire sky.

Judge of my little girl's happy confusion when, in adolescence, she first wandered through Sussex and Somerset and found the artistic conventions which lay about her infancy all coming true! She declares, however, that on coming to the famous view of Arundel Castle, with the lake and swans in the near foreground, she still always expects to see 'Love One Another' in gold letters across the heavens.

There is an agreeable shock for those who have firm views on the non-representational character of Japanese art if they will but go to the Zoo, where in the black frames of the aquarium tanks the most exquisitely formal Japanese compositions of fish make and unmake themselves before the eyes all day long. Another bit of fun of this kind occurs when from the gallery opposite the Throne one first sees the opening of Parliament in the House of Lords.

You have probably always assumed before then that the makers of ancient woodcuts recording important assemblies of the sort simply didn't know how to draw, and merely followed their own conventions, but here are the conventions in real life—the jammed boxes of oddly-dressed solemn folk, the rows of peers reduced by the heavy similarity of their robes to a series of simple curves. One never looks at a mediaeval woodcut again without a deepened respect.

Half the joy of wandering is in these sudden recognitions. It might be submitted that they shorten one's sight, as it were, and turn everything into stale news; but the actual effect is surely rather that of finding friends in the company on arriving at what was feared would be a bleakly unfamiliar gathering. One certainly did not feel less alien, after finding, during a morning's solitary ramble on the Palatine, a cluster of living green acanthus about the base of a broken, but still standing Corinthian column which (perhaps centuries ago) had lost

the carven foliage of its capital. Rather was one put in direct contact with the ancient world in which the familiar sight of leaf and pillar was first crystallised.

And the other day, during an architectural tour of Cambridge, all one's annoyance that the place had broken out into alleged 'fairy lamps' and tent poles because of May-week junketings, was soothed by the sudden sight of a long table already spread with cloth and flowers and candelabra behind the Renaissance arches of the loggia of Pepys's Library, as though it were presently to be peopled by Veronese ladies with piles of golden hair or by the wedding guests from Cana of Galilee. After all, feasts probably *did* look very like that in the days when Renaissance arches were new.

There is a pleasant guessing game for idle moments in the further possibilities of artistic conventions coming true. I am already warned that when one arrives in the South Seas one finds that Gauguin was as firm a realist as Sickert or Moreau, and the warning stirs infinite expectations. Can it be that if I travel far enough I shall one day find smooth Chinese ladies watching the clouds from balconies that appear to float in space, or slender Persian princes pursuing leopards through flowering groves?

Shall I one day lose my breath at the sight of a man frightful as the Etruscan Apollo, or find a woman with the comforting, untroubled grandeur of the Demeter in the British Museum?



## THE BECKETT-CARPENTIER FIGHT

BY G. BERNARD SHAW

From *The Nation*, Dec. 13th, 1919

*Mr. Bernard Shaw needs no introduction. As a journalist, he criticized literature for the Pall Mall Gazette under Stead, music for The Star under T. P. O'Connor, pictures and music for The World under Edmund Yates, the theatres for the Saturday Review under Frank Harris, and, apparently, pugilism for The Nation under H. W. Massingham. All these eminent editors are dead. Mr. Shaw, who survives, suggests to me a cold bath and a large piece of unscented soap. He has always advertised his eccentricities and has never advertised his good works. He is a celebrity who never fails in kindly courtesy.*

IF you were not at The Great Fight, and are at all curious about it, imagine four thousand people packed by night into a roofed enclosure with a gallery around it. I had better not call it a building, because that word has architectural associations; and this enclosure has none. It is fearfully ugly and calls itself a Stadium, probably to provide modern poets with a rhyme for radium. The four thousand people are all smoking as hard as they can; and the atmosphere, which will be described in the morrow's papers as electric, is in fact murky, stifling, and fumesome. In the midst is a scaffold, or place of execution, twenty-four feet square, fenced by ropes, and glared down upon so intolerably by arc lights that some of the spectators wear improvised brown paper hat brims to shield their eyes. On the scaffold is a mild man, apparently a churchwarden, but really a referee, patiently watching two hard-working Britons earning a precarious livelihood by boxing for the amusement of the four thousand. They are tired, and have not the smallest animosity to give a bitter sweet to their exertions; but they are most earnest and industrious, and one feels, in spite of the sportive alacrity which they keep up

like a ballet-dancer's smile, and their attempts to give a little extra value when the arc lights are increased to cinematograph the last round or two, that they are thinking of their little ones at home. One of them presently gets a tooth, real or artificial, loosened. His second extracts it with his fingers; his opponent apologetically shakes hands; and they return to the common round, the nightly toil. It seems indelicate to stare at them; and I proceed to study the audience.

Like all sporting audiences it consists mostly of persons who manifestly cannot afford the price of admission. My seat has cost me more than ten times what I have paid to hear *Parsifal* at Bayreuth or Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* at a very special performance at the Grand Opera in Paris. Certainly there are people here who can spare ten guineas or twenty-five easily enough: honorables and right honorables, explorers, sporting stockbrokers, eminent professional men, plutocrats of all sorts, men with an artistic interest in the display like Robert Loraine, Granville-Barker, Maurice Baring, Arnold Bennett and myself. But the prevalent impression is the usual one of a majority of men who have sacrificed a month's wages to be present, and hope to retrieve it by bets on the result.

Here and there is a lady. Not any particular sort of lady or no lady: just an ordinary lady. The one who happens to be sitting by me is one next whom I might find myself in the stalls of any theatre, or in church. The girl at the end of the next row would be perfectly in place in any west-end drawing-room. My lady neighbor watches the weary breadwinners on the scaffold, and tries to feel excited when they seek rest in leaning their heads affectionately on one another's shoulders, and giving one another perfunctory thumps on the ribs ('kidney punches') and on the nape of the neck ('rabbit punches') to persuade the audience that they are 'mixing it' terribly. This is modern in-fighting, which seems to me simply despicable. But I fancy she is trying to stifle a suspicion that she had

better have stayed at home and spent the price of her ticket on a new hat. As for me, nothing would have induced me to stay in the place four minutes had I not been waiting for the not very far off undivine event towards which the sporting section of creation had moved.

Everything comes to an end at last, even the minor items in a boxing program. The boxers retired, presumably to their ain firesides; and the scaffold was occupied by one unknown to me, for I belong to an older generation. This philanthropist earned my heartfelt gratitude by adjuring the audience, if it loved the champions, to refrain from smoking; after which the atmosphere cleared until it was no thicker than an average fog. Suddenly a figure from the past—from my past—was announced and appeared. It was Jack Angle, no longer a trim, clean-shaven, young amateur athlete, but a *père noble* in white moustaches, exactly like Colonel Damas in *The Lady of Lyons*. I found myself saying involuntarily, 'Thank Heaven! here at last is somebody who knows something about boxing.' I looked round for his contemporaries, Chinnery, Douglas, Michell, Frost-Smith, and the rest; but if they are alive and were present I could not identify them. He instructed us politely but authoritatively how to behave ourselves.

Then the cheering began, rather localized, because from most of the seats little could be seen except the platform. Even the Prince of Wales had had some difficulty in procuring silence for his brief speech when he entered; and several people believed for some time that it had been made by Carpentier. As it happened, I was near the gangway by which the champions came in, and therefore saw at once that the cheering was for Mr. Joseph Beckett, who was approaching in an unpretentious dressing-gown. Mr. Beckett, though the descriptive reporters insisted on making him play Orson to his opponent's Valentine, is by no means ill-looking. His

features are not Grecian; but he can be described exactly as a very sensible-looking man; and I may say at once that he behaved all through, and has behaved since, more sensibly than most men would in a very trying situation. I liked Mr. Beckett very well, and did not change my opinion later, as some of his backers did. He mounted the scaffold, and went to his corner. A burst of louder cheering made me look around again to the gangway; and this time I was startled by a most amazing apparition: nothing less than Charles XII, 'The Madman of the North,' striding along the gangway in a Japanese silk dressing-gown as gallantly as if he had not been killed exactly 201 years before. I have seldom received so vivid an impression; and I knew at once that as this could hardly be Charles, he must be either Carpentier or the devil. Genius could not be more unmistakable. Being in that line myself I was under no illusion as to genius being invincible. I knew that Mr. Beckett might turn out to be Peter the Great, and that Charles might be going to his Poltava; but genius is genius all the same, in victory or defeat. The effect of the audience on the two men was very noticeable. Beckett, too sensible to be nervous, put up with the crowd of people staring at him as a discomfort that was all in the day's work. Carpentier rose at the crowd, and would have had it forty thousand instead of four if he could. He was at home with it; he dominated it; he picked out his friends and kissed hands to them in his debonair way quite naturally, without swank or mock modesty, as one born to move assemblies.

The descriptive reporters began to scribble their tale of a frail French stripling and a massive British colossus. But the physical omens were all against the Briton. Beckett, who was trained, if anything, a little too fine, has a compact figure, a boxlike chest, stout, stumpy arms useful only for punching, and a thickish neck too short to take his head far out of harm's way. Carpentier, long and lithe, has a terrible pair of

arms, very long, with the forearms heavy just where the weight should be. He has a long chest, a long reach, a long head. Nobody who knew the A B C of boxing could doubt for a moment that unless Beckett could wear him down and outstay him, and stand a good deal during the process, he could not win at the physical odds against him except by a lucky knock-out.

When the men stood up, another curious asset of Carpentier's raised the extraordinary question whether he had not been taught to box by a lady. Some years ago Mrs. Diana Watts, a lady athlete who believed that she had discovered the secret of ancient Greek gymnastics, reproduced with her own person the pose and action of the Discobolus and the archer in the Heracles pediment in the British Museum, both of which had been up to that time considered physically impossible. Her book on the subject, with its interesting photographs, is still extant. Her method was to move and balance the body on the ball of the foot without using the heel, and to combine this with a certain technique of the diaphragm. Now the moment 'Time' was called, and Carpentier on his feet in the ring, it was apparent that he had this technique. He was like a man on springs; and the springs were not in his heels, but in the balls of his feet. His diaphragm *tendue* was perfect. Whether his lady instructor was Mrs. Diana Watts or Dame Nature, she had turned out a complete Greek athlete. This really very remarkable and gymnastically important phenomenon has been overlooked, partly because it has not been understood, but partly also because the change in Carpentier's face when he sets to work is so startling that the spectators can see nothing else. The unmistakable Greek line digs a trench across his forehead at once; his color changes to a stony grey; he looks ten thousand years old; his eyes see through stone walls; and his expression of intensely concentrated will frightens everyone in the hall except his opponent, who is far too busy to attend to such curiosities.

There was no fight. There was only a superb exhibition spar, with Beckett as what used to be called a chopping block. For a few moments he wisely stuck close to his man; but Mr. Angle gave the order (I did not hear it, but was told of it) to break away; and Beckett then let the Frenchman get clear and faced him for outfighting. From that moment he was lost. Carpentier simply did the classic thing: the long shot with the left: the lead-off and get-away. The measurement of distance—and such distance!—was exact to an inch, the speed dazzling, the impact like the kick of a thoroughbred horse. Beckett, except for one amazed lionlike shake of the head, took it like a stone wall; but he was helpless: he had no time to move a finger before Carpentier was back out of his reach. He was utterly outspeeded. Three times Carpentier did this, each hit more brilliant, if possible, than the last. Beckett was for a moment dazed by the astonishing success of the attack; and in that moment Carpentier sent in a splendidly clean and finished right to the jaw. It is not often that perfect luck attends perfect style in this world; but Carpentier seemed able to command even luck. The blow found that mysterious spot that is in all our jaws, and that is so seldom found by the fist. There was no mistaking the droop with which Beckett went prone to the boards. In an old-fashioned fight he would have been carried by his seconds to his corner and brought up to the scratch in half a minute quite well able to go on. Under the modern rules he had to lie unhelpt; and at the end of ten seconds Carpentier was declared the winner.

Carpentier had made the spar so intensely interesting that the seventy-four seconds it had occupied seemed like ten; and I could hardly believe that four had elapsed between the moment when Beckett dropped to the boards and the jubilant spring into the air with which Carpentier announced that the decision had been given in his favor. He was as unaffected in his delight as he had been in his nervousness before 'Time'

was called, when he had asked his bottle holder for a mouthful of water and thereby confessed to a dry mouth. The usual orgy followed. Pugilists are a sentimental, feminine species, much given to kissing and crying. Carpentier was hoisted up to be chaired, dragged down to be kissed, hung out by the heels from the scaffold to be fondled by a lady, and in every possible way given reason to envy Beckett. Beckett's seconds, by the way, so far forgot themselves as to leave their man lying uncared for on the floor after he was counted out until Carpentier, indignant at their neglect, rushed across the ring and carried Beckett to his corner. I suggest to the masters of the ceremonies at these contests, whoever they may be, that this had better not occur again. It is true that the decision was so sudden and sensational that a little distraction was excusable; but if Carpentier, who had the best reason to be carried away by his feelings, could remember, those whose duty it was could very well have done so if they had been properly instructed in their duties.

Now for the seamy side of the affair, the betting side. As I pushed my way through the crowd in Holborn, I could see by the way my news was received that every poor dupe of the sporting papers had put his shillings or pence or even his quid or two on Beckett. Never had a betting ramp been more thoroughly organized. When the war was over nobody knew whether military service had spoiled Carpentier for boxing purposes or left him as good as ever. If he were as good, or better, then clearly oceans of money could be made at a risk no greater than any gambler will take, by persuading the public that his sun had set and that the Carpentier who knocked out Wells in seventy-three seconds was a back number. Accordingly, the situation was taken in hand in the usual fashion. A British pugilist of something less than commanding eminence was sent to France and pitted against Carpentier, who gave a poor display and obtained the decision with

difficulty. Here was proof positive of his decadence. Then the press got to work. Beckett, progressing rapidly from victory to victory, was extolled as invulnerable and invincible. Carpentier's reputation was discounted until hardly a shred of it remained. His two youthful defeats were retold. The public were reminded that he had obtained a decision against Gunboat Smith only on an unintentional foul by that gentleman; and ring reporters solemnly declared their conviction that but for this accident Carpentier could not have lasted another round. I was informed on the strength of private information from 'the French colony' (whatever that may be) that Carpentier had sold the fight and that it was arranged that Beckett should win. Then came a clump of boxing articles, each giving a dozen reasons to shew that nothing but a miracle could prevent Beckett from wiping the floor with the exhausted and obsolete Frenchman. I do not know how high the odds were piled at last; but on the morning of the fight every ringstruck sportsman who knew nothing about boxing (and not one in a hundred of the people who read about boxing, or for that matter, who write about it, knows anything worth knowing) had his bet on Beckett. Most of these poor devils do not know even now how completely they were humbugged. They blame Beckett.

Beckett is not to blame. What happened to him happened to Sayers sixty-six years ago when he was beaten for the first and only time by Nat. Langham. Langham taught Donnelly, who taught Mr. Angle's and my generation the long shot with the left and get-away of which Carpentier gave such a brilliant demonstration; and it beat even the invincible Sayers. Langham could not knock him out, because the knock-out, though effective for ten seconds, does not last thirty; and Langham had to keep hitting Sayers' eyes until they were closed, and poor Tom, blinded, had to weep over his solitary defeat. But Sayers' most famous achievements



came later; and there is no reason in the world why Beckett should not be as successful as ever in spite of his having shared Sayers' fate. When he described his defeat as a million-to-one chance, he exaggerated the odds against a knock-out; but the knock-out is always a matter of luck; and Beckett has probably taken dozens of clouts on the jaw as heavy, if not so artistic, as Carpentier's, without turning a hair.

As to the brutality of the affair, Beckett was chatting to his friends over the rope without a mark on his face, and with £3,000 in his pocket, before they had stopped kissing Carpentier. There are many industrial pursuits more painful and much more dangerous than boxing. The knock-out is probably the most effective anaesthetic known to science: that is why it is so conclusive. Many women would let Carpentier knock them about for twenty rounds for a pension of £150 a year. The valid objection is the old Puritan objection: it is not the pain to the pugilist, but the pleasure to the spectator that matters. To the genuine connoisseur, it is simply distressing to see a boxer hurt beyond the harmless point up to which every reasonably hardy sportsman is prepared to smart for the sake of the game. Mr. Angle's expression of concern as he contemplated Beckett on the boards was a study, though he knew that Beckett was fast asleep. But unquestionably many of the spectators believe that they are witnessing acts of cruelty, and pay for admission for their sake, not understanding boxing in the least. Also, the contests, like all contests, act as a propaganda of pugnacity and competition. Sometimes the demoralizing effect is visible and immediate. I have seen men assault their neighbors after witnessing a rough and tumble fight for some time. But the effect of a highly skilled display such as Carpentier gave overawes the spectators. It often reduces them to absolute silence. It fascinates the connoisseurs, and frightens the novices and the riff-raff. The question of the suppression of prize-fighting is,

therefore, not a simple one. The commercial exploitation of prize-fighting is bad, like the commercial exploitation of everything else; for in pugilism as in other things 'honor sinks where commerce long prevails'; and though such atrocities as the poisoning of Heenan and the rest of the blackguardism which compelled the authorities to make short work of the old prize ring in the eighteen-sixties are now hardly possible, yet Mr. Cochran and other *entrepreneurs* of the ring must bear in mind that they can secure toleration only by being on their very best behavior. The belief that pugnacity and the competitive spirit are the secret of England's greatness may give way at any moment to the equally plausible theory that they are the causes of her decline.

The world now waits breathless for the meeting between Carpentier and Mr. Dempsey. The general sentiment on the night of the fourth was undoubtedly, 'May I be there to see.' I know nothing of Mr. Dempsey's quality as a boxer; but if he can play at lightning long shots with an instinctive command of the duck and counter, and on occasion sidestep a boxer who, as the cinematograph proves, has a dangerous habit of leading off from his toes without stepping in, with the certainty of falling heavily on his nose if his adversary takes in the situation and gets out of the way in time, Charles XII may find his Poltava yet.

Such are the impressions of one who has not for thirty-five years past dreamt of attending a boxing exhibition. If I be asked why I have abstained for so long, I reply that any intelligent person who frequents such exhibitions will soon be convinced that the English are congenitally incapable of the art of boxing. When you have seen a hundred contests between two hundred Britons, and have concluded that every single one of the two hundred must be the very worst boxer in the world, and his admirers the most abject gulls that ever tipped their way, like Mr. Toots, into pugilistic society, you are

driven to the conclusion that you would be happier at home, or even in a theatre or concert room. The truth is, of course, that boxing such as Carpentier's demands qualities which their possessors will not waste on so trivial and unamiable a pursuit in such rude company. It was worth Carpentier's while to escape from the slavery of the coal pit and win £5,000 in seventy-four seconds with his fists. It would not have been worth his while if he had been Charles XII. Thus the prize-fighters are either geniuses like Carpentier, too few and far between to keep up one's interest in exhibitions, or else poor fellows whose boxing is simply not worth looking at except by gulls who know no better. And so I doubt whether I shall go again for another thirty-five years except when Carpentier is one of the performers.

## THE BATTLE OF FOOTERLOO

BY ROBERT LYND

From the *Daily News*, April 30th, 1923

*Robert Lynd is the literary editor of the News Chronicle, and the writer of innumerable delightful essays, most of which have appeared in the New Statesman. A critic of taste, who is never over-emphatic, he has become one of the literary pundits of his generation. When Robert Lynd praises, the public buys, and the public is right. In the essay printed here, he shows his qualities as a descriptive reporter.*

THE most sensational Cup Final in history! That is what everybody kept saying to everybody else over and over again.

It would, perhaps, be an exaggeration to say that Wembley Park was turned into a battlefield; but, as the stretcher-

bearers bore the seeming corpses one after another through the crowd and out of the ground, it looked considerably more like a battlefield than like a football-field.

Nowhere but in England—perhaps, nowhere but in London—would it have been possible to have had so many of the elements of a riot without the riot itself actually taking place.

A part of the crowd undoubtedly behaved badly, but it did not behave nearly so badly as it might have behaved. The Londoner is a moderate man even in his disorderly moments. He is content to rush a policeman without hurting him.

The London police are also a body of moderate men. They are content to spend an hour in pushing, pressing, and persuading a mob back into its proper place, instead of scattering it in one crowded minute of glorious life by more violent methods and leaving the plain strewn with broken skulls, as the police in more excitable lands might do. There were only 1,000 casualties at the Cup Final. That is really a great tribute to everybody.

And what a setting for such scenes! The Stadium—which, as the programme informed us, is equal in area to the Biblical city of Jericho—was like a huge bowl up the inside of which human beings were packed as human beings have never been packed before, even at a football match.

They were packed so closely in the popular stands that you could see only their faces and their hats, and you could not see even these. Each face was a mere pebble in a bank of shingle that seemed fifty times higher than any bank of shingle that was ever cast up by the tides of a thousand years.

Or, if you prefer the comparison, the crowd on the distant terraces, as the sun shone on it, looked like a gigantic mass of uncooked sweetbreads that wobbled continually as a new crowd poured into it.

It was mostly composed of men and boys in their ordinary clothes. But some of them wore paper caps of red, white and blue in their enthusiasm for West Ham, and a few wore white and blue top-hats in honour of Bolton Wanderers. There were also all kinds of favours—rosettes and metal cups decorated with the ribbons of the rival teams—bought from hawkers on the way and worn in the button-hole. And every other man or boy seemed to have a rattle.

This is an instrument of torture that, as it is whirled round and round, makes a noise like a rack. When I arrived at the Stadium, about one o'clock, thousands of men and boys were already whirling rattles. Those who had no rattles yelled. Those who could not yell cheered. Those who could not cheer joined in whistling a fox-trot that the band of the Irish Guards seemed to be playing—it was almost inaudible—in the middle of the green field.

There was, indeed, something for everybody to do, and though one could not quite make out what the people who yelled were yelling, or what the people who cheered were cheering, one guessed that it had something to do with the respective merits of West Ham or Bolton Wanderers, and everybody seemed to be extraordinarily happy about it.

And the sun shone, and the green field, that had circles and parallelograms beautifully painted on it in whitewash, was lovely as a tennis-lawn in a country garden. How fair a scene! Is it any wonder that, in presence of this virgin green-sward, and in the season of the first lilacs and the first nightingales, yell after yell went round the ground, with cheer after cheer following it, and always to the noble accompaniment of a multitude of rattles that sounded like the voices of a million demented corncrakes?

Suddenly the peace of the scene was broken in upon by the spectacle of a policeman running. To see a policeman running is, I think, next to hearing a declaration of war, the most

exciting experience of which a human being is capable. This policeman, as he tore with long legs along the cinder track, was obviously running for help.

Looking over towards one of the two-shilling stands, one saw that men were tumbling like sheep over the railings of the stands and tussling with policemen, who tried in vain to keep them from seizing upon seats that did not belong to them.

Other police hurried up, and, though they could not drive the invasion back, at least they prevented it from becoming any worse. And rattles rattled, and larynxes and pharynxes made all the noises of which the human throat is capable. And the ambulance men came on to the field under the red cross of Geneva and carried off the wounded.

Then, at the other side of the field, we caught sight of another policeman running, and we could see that the same kind of thing was happening over there, only worse. I cannot help thinking that the people who leaped over the barriers were to a great extent innocent people. After all, human beings were pouring down upon them from behind like a score of Alpine torrents. The police attempted to drive them back, but you might as well have attempted to drive a man through the eye of a needle. And once more the ambulance men came on to the field and carried off the wounded.

Even so, the crowd had as yet seized only a small piece of the rim of the cinder-track surrounding the field. They sat down and dug themselves in. The police caught a few of them by the collars and tried to force them back. The others rose and advanced at a run five yards further and in again.

Other parts of the ground found that and on all the sides the crowd could be seen leaping over the railings as easily as a high tide leaps over a breakwater on a stormy day. And, as they leaped, others leaped on their backs

and drove them to the very touchline. And policemen ran. And one of them began to work hard at a telephone. And the ambulance men came on and carried off the wounded.

It was plain by this time that something extraordinary had happened, and rumours from the outside spoke of furious crowds that had found the gates closed and had broken them down. A man who had just arrived told me: 'There are thousands of people out there spitting blood because they can't get in—thousands of people who have paid for their tickets.'

Alas, they got in all right. Never did the ancient Goths and the Ostrogoths and the Visigoths sweep down upon the green places of Europe as this horde of invaders swept into our little Biblical city of Jericho.

They spread over the grass of the playing-field like locusts. Others streamed in after them, and before long there was such a mob of men collected on the field that scarcely any grass was visible, except a little green oasis in the middle of the ring of bandmen, who were gallantly playing a tune that nobody could hear.

A crash overhead made the people in the covered stand look up, and told them that one bold invader had even got on to the roof. He had fallen through, the brave fellow, and we could see his legs kicking from the waist downwards.

The crowd in the stands were now yelling their opinions of the crowd on the field at the top of 127,000 voices. To judge by the language of the man who was standing behind me, the opinion was unfavourable. I think he was one of the invaders, who had broken into the Press gallery, but he wanted to see the match. Luckily the crowd on the field was unable to hear him. Otherwise I feel sure it would have resented some of the things he said. He was not content to use words like 'bloom-ing,' or 'dashed,' or even 'blinking,' and he accused them of quite unmentionable vices. I was glad that the sound of

rattles, motor-horns, yells, and whistles partially drowned the more lurid passages in the most eloquent monologue to which it has ever been my privilege to listen.

Into the black sea on the grass, blue lines of policemen, hurried up from London, began to insinuate themselves, the crowds on the stands loudly cheering them, and whirling their rattles. But by this time no one any longer believed that the ground could be cleared by foot-police. Old gentlemen with militarist leanings called for fixed bayonets and cavalry charges.

It was as though the stands and the grass were at war with each other. We booed the invaders as no villain of melodrama was ever booed. And we waved our rattles to fortify the booh. The blasphemous man behind me had by this time begun to use words that I could understand only with an effort. And the ambulance men came on and carried off the wounded.

Then the first horse-policeman arrived. Had he been Steve Donoghue bringing in a winner of the Derby, he could not have been received with such a pandemonium of yells and rattles. If the little Biblical city of Jericho was to be saved, he was the man to do it, and, as three or four more horsemen came into view, the people who had got in legally roared the roar of victory and began to abuse the people who had got in illegally more vehemently than ever.

Alas, for the rarity of Christian charity! I fear that the dearest dream of many of us just at that moment was a new and successful Charge of the Light Brigade.

When King George arrived and appeared in his red box, it was as though a temporary truce had been declared between the party of law and the party of disorder. The fifty thousand Wat Tylers on the field roared 'God save the King!' and waved their hats and arms. Seen from above, it looked as if all the pebbles on the Brighton beach were standing up on their ends and shouting.



Immediately afterwards, however, the war was renewed with increased vigour, and, as the horsemen swept on to the field, the more timid spirits on the outskirts began to drift away under the arches and to make for home.

Even so, the field still remained black with people, and, as one section of the crowd retreated before the teeth and the tails of the horses, another section flowed in and took its place.

There was one policeman on a white horse who was a perfect genius, and who could himself keep a crowd of at least a thousand moving. He butted them with the horse's tail, he pushed at them with the horse's sides, he rode straight at them with the horse's mouth. And the animal did all that he told it to do as cleverly as the cleverest circus-pony, and advanced into the mob with as little fear as though it had been a tank. The foot-police now began to take the crowd in sections, and joining hands with an occasional sailor or well-wisher, attempted to recover the field from the invaders yard by yard.

'Look, the crowd has begun to fight the police!' somebody cried hopefully, and, just below us, one man had certainly begun to fight with one policeman.

It was during this excitement that I saw the extraordinary spectacle of a man walking and scrambling over the heads of the spectators on one of the stands, as over a solid floor, determined, I suppose, to get out and to get home, lest a worse thing should befall him. He was, I understand, taken to hospital.

It was about the same time that a man bumped into me, and, as though to test me, held out his hand with a broad grin, and said, 'Good old Lancashire!' His friend, who followed him, also bumped into me, and gripped me by the hand, and said knowingly, with a still broader grin, 'Good old Lancashire!' I did not dare to contradict him. But the bones of my hand ached protestingly.

Just as we were wondering whether the Cup Final could be played at all, the teams came out into the thick of the mob, carrying two little nut-coloured balls, and the crowd made a narrow laneway for them and slapped every man of them enthusiastically on the back as he made his way through to be introduced to the King. I should not care to be slapped on the back by ten thousand men from Bolton. Or, for that matter, by ten thousand men from West Ham. Or, indeed, by ten thousand men from anywhere.

Once more the rattles rattled, the vocal cords vociferated, the horse-police butted, the foot-police pushed, a man with a megaphone megaphoned (though nobody could hear him), and the ambulance men carried off the wounded. And still the man on the white horse was riding up and down, driving boys and men before him like chaff before the wind, and the crowds on the stands ululated with joy as little pools of green became visible and expanded into little ponds and gradually into little lakes.

Meanwhile each of the teams was practising at dribbling and passing and shooting goals as unconcernedly as though they did not know that they were surrounded on all sides by tens of thousands of people in conflict with the police. The sun had gone out by now, and it was cold, and Seddon danced his knees up and down like pistons to keep himself warm. Other players stretched their legs or jumped up and down like children or juggled the ball on their toes.

At length the crowd on one side of the field was driven back to the touch-line, and amid a wild tumult of cheers the man on the white horse rode among the mob like a god of victory, and even butted people out of the net behind the goal posts. Slowly but surely chains of police were pressing back other sections of the crowd north, east, and west off the field of play.

Then, wonder of wonders, we saw the captains meeting in

the middle of the field for the toss, and, amid a tumult of yells, rattles, and noises for which there are no words in the English language, it became evident that the toss had been won by Bolton Wanderers.

As for the football that followed, how mild a game it seemed after so sensational a prologue! To be sure, a shout went up to heaven from a hundred thousand throats when Jack, of Bolton, shot that lightening ball through the goal posts in the first few minutes of the game. And there were shouts from ten thousand other throats when the West Hammers in their claret-and-blue shirts drove up like a stormy sea towards the Bolton goal, only to break again and again on backs that would let no dangerous ball pass them.

But even these things were hardly so exciting as when the crowd began to surge back on to the field of play, and the match had to be held up while the police once more hurried up reinforcements and drove the interlopers back to the touch-line.

After that there were many moments of exciting play, as Finney or Vizard took the ball on his toe and looked as though he could keep three balls going at a time, like a great conjuror. But the game as a whole was hardly exciting; indeed, it had scarcely started when thousands of spectators began to stream homewards, some of them because they could see nothing, others because they had seen quite enough for one day in the life of any human being. 'A damned farcel' said one elderly gentleman, as he clambered out of the grand stand, and so home.

Yet to the Bolton Wanderers, swift as deer in their white shirts and blue shorts, it was evident that not the scenes but the football was the one thing of interest in the day. And when, in the second half, J. R. Smith scored their second goal in a flash so swift that for a moment men doubted it, his fellow-players ran up to him as though they would have embraced

him, and as he passed from one congratulating hand to another, he was like a man dancing through the grand chain in a set of lancers.

And that, for all practical purposes, was the end of it. And, shortly afterwards, the crowd was back in a rush over the grass, cheering the Cup as it was handed to the winners, roaring 'God Save the King!' and moving like a great army out of the Stadium, and leaving that beautiful green field littered with paper, like Hampstead Heath after a Bank Holiday.

I did not leave the ground until twenty minutes to seven, and even then there were still a few stragglers left.

Thus ended the bloodless battle of Footerloo.

## PETTICOAT LANE

BY J. B. PRIESTLEY

From the *Saturday Review*, December 15th, 1928

*Mr. J. B. Priestley came to London from Bradford, viâ Cambridge. He quickly established himself as a first-rate critic and as one of the best of living essayists. Having made these positions secure he turned his talents to creative literature. The results are The Good Companions and Angel Pavement.*

THAT curious smoky loneliness which is London on a winter Sunday morning was shattered, as if a gigantic bomb had burst, the moment I turned the corner from Aldgate High Street into Middlesex Street. This will not seem odd to anybody who remembers that Middlesex Street was once called

Petticoat Lane, and is still Petticoat Lane every Sunday morning. At first I saw nothing except the tops of stalls, because I was wedged in the crowd. We pushed, and they pushed—not angrily, but in quiet good-humour—and gradually we began to move until we achieved something like a yard a minute. Then suddenly the crowd thinned and I found myself ejected—and a little man was dangling gaudy suspenders not six inches from my nose. ‘Take a look at ’em,’ he was roaring.

After escaping from these suspenders, I joined the group in front of a seedy-looking man who was talking in an astonishingly loud and angry voice. He had not shaved that morning, or perhaps the morning before either, and wore neither collar nor tie, but nevertheless his stall glittered with gold watches, dozens and dozens of them, and not very far from the dirty fist he kept banging down was a heap of money, a whole heap of it, pounds and pounds. There was nothing very Jewish in his appearance, but never before have I heard such a strong Hebraic accent. When you heard his talk of ‘dese vatches’ you would have sworn he was doing it on purpose. ‘In de Vest End you go and pay six tibes de prize for dese vatches. And vy? Because, I tell you,’ he cried, in a towering rage, ‘dey’re all robbers.’ And in a more tender mood, that man, I am convinced, would not have hesitated to call you ‘ma tear.’

I had imagined such accents were no longer heard in this world. Indeed, I have never met them except in the harum-scarum novels of the thirties and forties of the last century, early Dickens and Thackeray and *Valentine Vox* and *Ten Thousand a Year*. But, indeed, I might have suddenly been plunged into a chapter of one of those novels. When I was a boy and stared at those old illustrations by Cruikshank and ‘Phiz,’ so fantastically crowded and crazily energetic, I thought that London was probably like that, but afterwards

I came to the conclusion that there was nothing realistic about those old illustrators, who merely reported the doings in some dingy elfland of their own invention. Now I see I was wrong. I am prepared to believe they really drew the London of their day. That London still persists, every Sunday morning in Petticoat Lane. I had pushed my way into a 'Phiz' drawing. Here was one of his streets—not simply crowded but *bursting* with humanity, and not ordinary humanity, of course, but queer, gargoyle-like beings, monstrously fat, lean as hop-poles, twisted, shaggy, battered, sinister. This fellow serving jellied eels, that squinting jovial man, accompanying a cheap gramophone record with a solo on a little tin toy trombone, this vast waddle of womanhood offering us a saucer of green peas, the curly Jew there smoothing out a pair of second-hand trousers—where have we seen them before? Why, in those queer scratchy illustrations we used to stare at, half fascinated, half repelled, so many years ago—in *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Oliver Twist*.

All the furious energy was still there. It was commerce, turned into pandemonium. A Dionysiac frenzy possessed nearly everybody who had anything to sell. There were rows and rows of men selling overcoats, and no sooner had I set my eyes on the first of them than I thanked Heaven I was wearing an overcoat. If I had not been, they would have pounced upon me at once and hustled me into one of their 'smart raglan overcoats I tell you people at Eighteen Shillings, I tell you Eighteen, all right then, Seventeen Shillings, for the last time this overcoat at *Sixteen Shillings!*' A youth in front of me was jammed into one and compelled to buy it, and later I saw him wandering about in it, still with a dazed expression on his face. One little man, all nose and bowler hat, was savagely cutting trousers to pieces with a carving knife. I do not know why he did it, but nobody seemed surprised. Men selling large pink vases would hit them with a hammer. A

fellow with razor strops to sell looked like a homicidal maniac. The sweat was streaming down his face, and one hand was bandaged and bloody. 'I'll now first take the edge off this razor,' he bellowed, and then, in a fury, he picked up the razor and attacked a block of wood with it. Later, when I passed, he was yelling, 'As the basis of this strop, people, you've got Carbonorum, the hardest substance known. Cuts glass, glass!' And the next moment there were showers of cut glass falling round him, through which you saw his eyes gleaming wildly.

It was a cold morning, but the innumerable young men who were selling cheap sweets were in their shirt sleeves, and even then looked uncomfortably hot. 'Not One,' they cried in a kind of ecstasy, slapping packets of chocolate and butter-scotch into paper bags, 'Not One—Not Two—Not Three—But *Four!* Who'll have the next?' Whenever one of these people had a drink, as they frequently did from bottles that no doubt came from Mr. Hyman Isbitsky's saloon across the way, you expected to hear a sizzling. Two young Hebrews, who were offering us cutlery rescued, they said, from a great fire, had worked up the evidence with such energy that it was hardly possible to see either of them or the cutlery for masses of slightly charred tissue paper, which they tossed about all over the place. What appeared at first sight to be a fight finally assumed the shape and sound of a very large man selling pull-overs at 'arf a dollar.' All the silk stockings were the centre of what looked like a riot. You saw them swaying in the air, above the massed heads, and then heard a voice that from the frenzied sound of it might have been prophesying the destruction of the city. 'They're not rubbish,' I heard one of these gigantic voices cry. 'Look at 'em. Feel 'em. I've sold rubbish, people. The other day I sold some at threepence a pair, and they *were* rubbish. I admit it. These are the real thing. Shilling a pair.' Even your character and destiny were

hurled at you as if Doomsday were already darkening the horizon, for the three or four fate-readers I saw (all in M.A. gowns) were summing up their victims and scribbling their prophecies on slips of paper at an astounding speed.

The first armies of the French Revolution could never have known a more militantly democratic spirit than the one that seemed to inspire all these frenzied salesmen. 'I don't care who you are,' they would roar, time after time, scores and scores of them. No matter whether they were selling pink vases or milk chocolate or watches or overcoats or mechanical toys or stockings or cheese sandwiches, they did not care who we were. All these things were being sold elsewhere, especially in the West End, at prices so monstrous that the salesmen's perspiration broke out afresh at the thought of them and their voices cracked when they came to record the infamy of it. In a passion of fair-dealing, they shook in our faces their licences and various mysterious documents that proved somehow they were speaking the truth. They brought out handfuls of money to show that it was not merely that they were after. And they did not care who we were.

In all that bustle, sound and fury, it was strange and arresting to discover a quiet little space, a dumb salesman. I saw a number of people apparently quite absorbed, around one stall where there was no noise, and I was so curious that I pushed my way through to see what was happening. It was a little stall covered with second-hand gloves of every description, from the lordly fur gauntlet to the dirtiest twisted cotton pair, and all the people were quietly busy looking them over and trying them on, while the proprietor, very tall, thin, and depressed, sat staring, lost in a reverie. And then, here and there I came upon small brown men, from some unknown Orient, standing motionless, with cheap gaudy scarves hanging over their arms. They said nothing, and I never saw them sell anything. They merely looked at us and



Petticoat Lane, their eyes a dark mystery. And then there was the dimmest and most hopeless figure of all. I remember only a drooping cap, drooping moustache, drooping chin—and his stock-in-trade, which consisted of three shiny red notebooks each labelled 'The Giant Memo Book.' I appeared to be the only person there who noticed his existence; nobody wanted to buy a Giant Memo, and his silence, his whole attitude, suggested that he knew that as well as I did. I thought of him trailing home with his three Giant Memos, the very dimmest shadow of a stationer. 'I don't care who you are,' they still roared. But I should like to have learned who he was, where he had been, what he had done, this dingy Cousin Silence of Petticoat Lane.

## ENGLAND'S STATE BALLET

By WILLIAM BOLITHO

From *The Outlook*

*William Bolitho was born in South Africa, and died at Avignon, a belated victim of war injuries, in 1930, at the age of forty. Bolitho was a pen-name. As William Ryall he was Paris correspondent for the Manchester Guardian, 1919-23. He first attracted attention as an essayist by his sketches in the London Outlook; he won resounding reputation on the New York World, 1923-30; and published inter alia Leviathan, Murder for Profit, Twelve against the Gods (his chief work), and, posthumously, Camera Obscura and Overture 1920, a play produced in New York after his death.*

CHANGING guard at Buckingham Palace is the State Ballet of the English. The French and the proud Russians do not know of this, and boast we have nothing to set against their national ballets. But their dancers are only seen in closed theatres, and

before paid seats: they use the oldest of arts for many things and small things. The English set their ballet in public, under the sky, and have only one subject.

The result is so much above other national shows, and so different in setting and step, that we forget its real kinship with the magnificent scenes of Pavlova and Nijinski, or with the school of the great Opera of Paris, and with the long unfolding of these from the naked rhythms which celebrated peace and war, marriage and death in the tribes, by steps ordered by art and emotion.

The English have lost all their own love-dances, and their fandangoes. But every morning, in London, their picked men figure an amazing, slow war-dance of watch and ward over their empire, their island, and their civilisation.

The enormous scene is the outer court of Buckingham Palace; an oblong of ash-violet asphalt. At the back are the high brown walls of the Palace, pierced by the King's Porch. Dividing it from the space outside is a fence of iron bars, yards high, of iron bars as thick as wrists, studded with emblems of the English cult—crowns, sceptres, symbols of union and order; it half-conceals the ceremonial place within, and half-frames it, like a Greek iconostasis. Set in the middle of these bars, like a cavern in a wood, are the great Gates.

When the King is in London, and they see the gay, unaccustomed Royal Standard over the roof, the crowd collect outside. The spectacle that is preparing is the central mystery of the British Empire; they have come to worship and admire. The soldier actors have divided into two choruses: active and passive; the departing and that which stays; the Old Guard and the New. The Old Guard, with drums rolling and slow, easy march, forms itself left, in a red, steady block. The gates are dragged open. The New Guard, free-stepping, with a smile in its music, blares into sight, through the ten-deep

crowd, then into the court. The gates close, the Old Guard are waiting, like men of stone.

Never on any other theatre were costumes such as these. Léon Bakst, in his most sublime fever, could not dress dancers like this. For these are professional soldiers, so in the oldest tradition of dancing, half priests in their present function and servants of an Empire. Their tunics, in the London colours, which even the shops and 'buses display, scarlet and brass yellow, intersected with arranged perpendiculars and angles of white pipe-clay, are cunningly devised like the body-masks of primitive devil dancers to take from them the appearance of flesh and blood; they destroy the look of solidity, changing them into two-dimensional figures as if cut out of cardboard.

The mighty bearskin—hairy, heathen, barbarous—turns them into giants, yet with its soft black and the elegance of side cockade they look not rustic nor ill-kempt, but like the Varing bodyguard of Byzance, splendid in their force. Their bandsmen show still more plainly in what luxurious service they are listed: their tunics encrusted an inch thick with jet and silver. In their hands the trumpets and trombones lose the familiar look and seem like monstrous exotic tulips, looted from the garden of another world.

The sky lets through a glint on them, and the eye catches the clean, silvery steel of their bayonets.

Once in place, and the great Gates close. All of us press closer to see the dance begin. Old Guard and New Guard face one another. Their officers advance, chin pressed to flag-stock in a bold and hieratic gesture as if they held some mystery, light but precious. They meet, touch hands to pass the order papers. The Old Guard comes to salute the New. They move in slow march, stiff instepped; they have put aside the joy of their entrance; the trumpets are still, and only the drum and the fifes mark their step; marching like this, not

heavily, but with measure between gravity and grace. No giddy Frenchmen nor stick-jointed Germans can be dignified when they slow march. With the King's Guards it is as grave and touching as a movement of Beethoven. They are figuring in the continuity of that watch and ward over their kings, their possessions, their homes, their island, and their empire which shall go on for ever unbroken. And the crowd understand. . . .

The next capital moment in the parade is still stranger. Two and two, the officers with their faded rich standards sloped, tread up and down in time the long front of the palace; two sentries with rigidly inclined bayonets follow them; then two more officers with drawn swords cross these and repass. The masses of scarlet and brass stand easy, left and right; warm gusts of regimental music away still farther to the right. These stationary masses of pure colour are a new beauty—the only movement is the flickering to and fro of the couples moving in their ritual task of taking over. The crowd stares, and shifts nervously like gypsies in a church, while this long ceremonial, this motionless mass dancing, lasts in silence.

Then, all having been performed, the sacred trust passed from scarlet soldier to scarlet soldier, the third act is ready. The tall policemen open the Gates, the crowd rushes to new positions. A sudden unimpeded gap of vision opens on to the two Guards. Bandsmen, weighed down by their copper, like savage chieftains, white aproned with skins, pipe-clayed, gorgeous figures line up to the opening in fours. Behind them, the rest turn at the word of command: one short stamp on the ground, more impressive than all the tramlings of Zulu *impis*. The drummers raise their sticks to their mouths, as if to kiss the tips; then the slow march again, out of the gates, more regularly than a river but as strong as a cataract. The Gates close. The sight has passed.

So in London they celebrate daily with all the pomp of art and tradition, the changing of the Guard. The old passes, the new remains; the breach between, instead of dividing, is exalted, and emphasises the unbroken watch. The war dancing of remote times has been transformed and ennobled: there remains in this changing of the Guard the unconquerable will to keep our own, which is the only thing the English know or tolerate in war. It is a beautiful thing of the highest art.

## PERSONAL SKETCHES



## LENIN

From *The Times*, April 4th, 1919

It is now, however, to his intellectual powers that Lenin owes his predominating position inside his own party. The almost fanatical respect with which he is regarded by the men who are his colleagues, and who are at least as jealous of each other as politicians in other countries, is due to other qualities than mere intellectual capacity. Chief of these are his iron courage, his grim, relentless determination, and his complete lack of all self-interest. In his creed of world-revolution he is as unscrupulous and as uncompromising as a Jesuit, and in his code of political ethics the end to be attained is a justification for the employment of any weapon. To him Capital is the Fiend Incarnate, and with such an enemy he neither gives nor asks for mercy.

Yet as an individual he is not without certain virtues. In the many attacks, both justified and unjustified, which have been made against him, no breath of scandal has ever touched his private life. He is married—according to all accounts singularly happily married—and, in a country where corruption has now reached its apogee, he stands out head and shoulders above all his colleagues as the one man who is above suspicion. To Lenin the stories of Bolshevik orgies and carousals have no relation. His own worldly needs are more than frugal, and his personal budget is probably the most modest of all the Bolshevik Commissaries. Dishonest, treacherous, guilty of the worst forms of secret diplomacy as the Bolsheviks have been in all their public dealings, Lenin himself, on the rare occasions on which he has consented to



see a foreign journalist or a foreign official, has always been extraordinarily frank. 'Personally, I have nothing against you. Politically, however, you are my enemy, and I must use every weapon I think fit for your destruction. Your Government does the same against me.'

Of course, he is a demagogue; has made use of all the demagogue's art. But behind all the inconsistencies of his policy, the tactics, the manœuvring, there lies a deep-rooted plan which he has been turning over in his mind for years and which he now thinks is ripe for execution. Demagogues have no constructive programme. Lenin, at least, knows exactly what he wishes to achieve and how he means to achieve it. Where other politicians try to adapt their programme to the needs and desires of society, Lenin is attempting to fit society to the narrow frames of his rigid, Prussian-like programme. A fanatic if you like, but a fanatic who has already made history and who has more genius than most fanatics. Cold, pitiless, devoid of all sentiment, utterly ruthless in his effort to force the narrow tenets of his Marxian dogma upon the whole world, Lenin is not a lovable character.

## THE CECILIANS

BY HERBERT SIDEBOTHAM

From *The Times*, Nov. 29th, 1920

*Herbert Sidebotham is perhaps the most prolific of living journalists. I am not sure that he is not the most prolific journalist who ever lived. He is the Parliamentary expert of the Daily Telegraph, Scrutator and a Student of Politics in the Sunday Times, and he writes the Candidus article every day in the Daily Sketch. For years he has spent a great part of his life in the Gallery of the House of Commons, the most wearisome place in the world. Other men wilt and fade away, but Sidebotham goes on writing with the same knowledge and distinction. He has been on the staffs of the Manchester Guardian and of The Times, both of which regret that they ever lost him.*

MR. BALFOUR, now floridly benign, a rich oracular voice issuing forth from the obscurer recesses of the Coalition; Lord Robert Cecil, a Hamlet in politics, noble of sentiment and frail of purpose; Lord Hugh, Mercutio in a cowl, intellectually athletic on a diet of dilemmas; Mr. Ormsby-Gore, still looking like an Eton boy, full of gentleness and good sense; as First, Second, and Third Gentlemen, the trenchant Lord Winterton, Mr. Walter Guinness the frank, and Mr. Edward Wood the earnest, not forgetting Lord Wolmer, though one seldom sees him, and, of course, the Marquess of Salisbury, carrying but hardly wielding the sword of his great name. These are the Cecilians. Only one, Mr. Balfour, sits on the Front Bench, there mourned by his family, but wherever they sit the Cecilians have their minds at any rate on the Front Bench. They were born to the Ministry, whether they get there or not.

For twenty years before the war there was hardly an enthusiasm in politics that did not find its enemies in the Cecils. Irish Home Rule, Tariff Reform, Imperial Federation, nearly every suggestion for organic change has withered alike under their sympathy and their opposition; every passion and nearly every hope in politics owes them a grudge, none the less deep because their criticism has often been wise and justified by the event.

From Mr. Balfour nothing is to be hoped. He does not seriously believe in politics as an instrument of human progress; to him they are merely the art of neutralising forces and engaging them in an equilibrium that is more or less stable, so that the really serious activities of the world may not be interfered with. What these are, he is not clear. For Mr. Balfour they are the critical enjoyment of the intellectual play of human life, with himself in a comfortable box; for others, the making of money; he himself has said that what makes most difference to human happiness is science, thinking that, perhaps, because he knows so little about it. Office he loves, not for the sake of exercising power, but for the feeling that it gives him that he could exercise power if he chose to do so. In fact, he no more influences the policy of the Coalition than Jonah steered the whale.

#### LORD R. CECIL AS HAMLET

The only hope is in Lord Robert Cecil; Lord Hugh is the abler man, but with him politics at best are only the clamp of ordered society, and the springs which move its elaborate mechanism are to be found in religion alone. The age is not really irreligious, but the semi-political forms of Lord Hugh's religion do not attract it, and for all the brilliancy of his intellect he is disqualified for leadership. Lord Robert Cecil is in better case, and less than a year ago he seemed marked out to be the real leader of the Opposition. He has dignity and a

personality; he speaks well enough always, and, when he is moved with eloquence; he has character and the broad humanity of his class, something of Mr. Balfour's dialectical skill combined with greater fertility of idea and more industry. The House thought much of him, and from the Labour benches in particular he always had an attentive and sympathetic hearing. For between Toryism and Socialism there is a natural sympathy; Mr. Herbert Spencer used to call Socialism the new Toryism, because both accepted the theory of the omnipotent State.

But the Cecils, though some of them believe in an omnipotent Church, have always opposed the idea of an omnipotent State, and if Lord Robert was ever under temptation to develop in that direction, the war would have cured him of it. He is the keenest champion of individual rights, bitterly critical of bureaucracy, and anxious to contract the functions of the State. These intellectual convictions were deepened by the long anguish of the war, and when at the end of it there emerged the conception of the League of Nations he embraced it as a new gospel. The League took a place in his political philosophy comparable to that occupied by the Church with Lord Hugh, and by Mr. Balfour's conception of party as an insurance policy in a world full of accidents. It fitted in perfectly with his humane temperament and his political philosophy. At last a Cecil was enthusiastic and even attune with the spirit of the age. Anything seemed possible.

These hopes that were formed of Lord Robert have not been realised, and the reason is that he cannot fight. Something always gets in the way, when there is something to be done as well as said, either consideration for his party, or the dislike that all his class have of a scene, or an instinctive Oxford repugnance for extremes, or it may be a temperamental reluctance to hurt anyone's feelings. He suffers from the fatal defect in rough-and-tumble politics of always seeing

the strength of the argument against him, and he can no more stand up to the Prime Minister in a controversy than he could box with a dinosaur. It is not cowardice, but the intellectual fascination that the arguments of the other side have over him. But if he is so respectful to his opponents' arguments when he himself is stating them, is it wonderful that when they come like fire from the mouth of that redoubtable dragon of debate, the Prime Minister, Lord Robert should be no St. George? Our Hamlet soliloquizes threateningly, but when the talk is over he rarely votes against the Government, let alone sets out to kill it.

But if the Cecilians have still to learn the work of opposition, they have shown that they can strike fire and conceive a genuine enthusiasm. Mr. Balfour's Zionism is something, Lord Robert Cecil's advocacy of the League of Nations and his pity for the plight of Eastern Europe have had power and sincerity and his humanity moves one. The younger men, too, have done well on Ireland, and shown that if they cannot as yet execute they can conceive a problem in a big-hearted and generous way. These are promising signs, and there are still the makings of a new party, not big perhaps, but influential and distinguished.

THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE AND  
M. CLEMENCEAU

BY WICKHAM STEED

From *The Times*, July 14th, 1918

*Mr. Wickham Steed was for many years The Times' correspondent in Vienna, and no man has a more thorough understanding of the mind of middle and south-eastern Europe. After he left Vienna, he was first foreign editor and then editor of The Times, and was that paper's special correspondent at the Paris Peace Congress. Wickham Steed knows everybody in Europe worth knowing, and has an expert's acquaintance with the bewildering ramifications of international politics. This article was telegraphed from Spa on July 13, 1920, and appeared in The Times of July 14, the Empress Eugénie having died on July 11.*

SPA is haunted. Ghosts of the dead and phantoms of the living flit through the streets and trouble the restless repose of minds wearied by the wranglings of the Peace Conference and seeking slumber between bombardments by thunderstorm. Peter the Great, Joseph II, Nicholas I, William I, the Empress Eugénie, William II, and his conqueror, Marshal Foch, are all here or have been here in spirit or in the flesh.

Why they came heaven only knows! Spa is a gruesome place in which to hold a peace conference. Possibly in bygone days it may have had attractions as a gambling hell. Certainly on the day when Marshal Foch has departed, the Empress Eugénie has died, and Mr. Lloyd George has telegraphed a sort of ultimatum enjoining Trotsky to stay his invasion of Poland, all life and history seen from the Spa angle seem one great gamble and game of chance.

History? What is history? Certainly not the whole truth, and often some form of solemn lie. Here in Spa, less than two

years after William's abdication, people do not know where the abdication took place, whether at the Villa Neuvois, where M. Millerand surveys a charming landscape from the grassy roof of the Kaiser's bomb-proof dug-out, while he counts the sacks of coal due from Germany to France, or at the Hôtel Britannique, where Mr. Lloyd George rehearses at breakfast the histrionic effects that have gained the British Prime Minister a great reputation as an actor who has missed his chance.

Imaginative minds still see the closing tableaux of the last act in the drama of William's abdication when the Kaiser, the whilom champion of Divine right, withstood Hindenburg's insistence that he should abdicate, and declared that, as he claimed he held his authority from his soldiers alone, to his soldiers only would he relinquish it; whereupon Hindenburg marshalled revolutionary soldiers in the town and persuaded them to write a demand for abdication, and presented it to William, who then signed the tear-stained document, witnessed for the last time a march past of the Guard, and departed, forsaken by all save one old servant. Barring some sudden turn in the roulette of fortune, it may be said of William, no matter how long his years in a foreign land, that he died at Spa in November, 1918.

#### A VISIT TO FARNBOROUGH

'No, I died in 1870.'

These words of the late ex-Empress Eugénie rang to-day in my ears as though uttered by her wraith, not by herself in the flesh at Farnborough in the same month of the same year. I had seen the Armistice celebrations in Paris on November 11. Chance, not uncorrected by design, took me to Farnborough on the Sunday following the celebration of the French national *Te Deum* of victory at Notre Dame. The ex-Empress inquired eagerly for details of happenings in France, which I did my best to supply.

Then, suddenly, with astounding vigour, she exclaimed: 'Ah, that Clemenceau! Were he my worst enemy I would love him, I could even kiss him, for the good he has done France.'

'May I give M. Clemenceau that message, madame?' I inquired.

'No,' she returned, 'no message. I died in 1870.'

'But, Madame, 1870 is now dead. Your Majesty can live again.'

'Non, non. Je suis bien morte. But Clemenceau made a blunder. He should have attended the *Te Deum* at Notre Dame. He would have united France. He would have taught a great lesson of moderation and unity. He might have become Consul.'

'I fancy M. Clemenceau cherishes no such ambition,' I observed.

'No matter. He can make good his mistake. A fortnight hence he will go to Strasbourg. He must visit the Cathedral. He may still unite France and give the lesson of unity and moderation.'

'May I give M. Clemenceau this advice from your Majesty?'

'No. I told you I died in 1870.'

Then, suddenly changing the conversation, the ex-Empress asked: 'Now what are you going to do for my poor country?'

'Why, Madame, every Englishman is ready to do all in his power, and more, for France.'

'I do not mean France. C'est de l'Espagne que je parle.'

#### A TALK WITH CLEMENCEAU

Chance, uncorrected by design, would have it that a week later, on Sunday evening, when Marshal Foch and M. Clemenceau came to London for their first visit after the Armistice, I met M. Clemenceau at the French Embassy in London. He called me into the Ambassador's little room for a chat, but as



he looked tired, I said: 'I won't stay long, M. le Président—certainly not as long as I stayed a week ago with an illustrious lady who talked, or kept me talking, for five hours by the clock, and left me worn out while she, with her ninety-three years, seemed as fresh as a maiden.'

'Ah, you frequent illustrious ladies of such tender age! What's her name?'

'Eugénie,' I answered.

'Tiens. Elle vit encore la vieille?'

'Yes, and she even said that if Clemenceau were her worst enemy she would love him and embrace him for the good he has done to France.'

'Excellent sentiments.'

'But when I asked whether I might tell you, she forbade it, saying that she had died in 1870.'

'C'est vrai. Elle est bien morte.'

'But she added that Clemenceau had made a blunder,' I went on.

'Ah, laquelle, par exemple?'

'He ought to have attended the *Te Deum* at Notre Dame. He would have united France, and would have taught a great lesson of unity and moderation. He might even have become Consul.'

'Clemenceau has no such ambition,' interjected the French Prime Minister.

'That is what I told her, M. le Président. "But," she continued, "Clemenceau can retrieve his mistake when he goes to Strasbourg a week hence. He must visit the Cathedral. He can still unite France and give a lesson of unity and moderation."'

'She'll be disappointed again, la vieille. Elle a bien fait de mourir.'

'I am not giving advice, M. le Président. I repeat only what I heard.'

THE STRASBOURG VISIT

Next Sunday M. Clemenceau was at Strasbourg amid indescribable rejoicing. He went to the Cathedral and heard the allocution from the Canon. Then, returning to Paris, he spoke in the Chamber of his Strasbourg experiences. If I remember rightly, one passage of his speech ran: 'The days we lived at Strasbourg are graven in my memory. I saw there among the crowd a dear old nun, who, with eyes downcast under her coif, softly sang the *Marseillaise*. It was a great lesson of unity and moderation.'

Whether the ex-Empress ever read that speech I know not. She certainly never knew M. Clemenceau had been told what she said. Possibly M. Clemenceau himself thought no more of her. But the facts are as I have recorded them.

What is history? A weaving together of innumerable strands, most of which remain invisibly embedded in the tissue. Yet people persist in trying to write history. One day somebody will record the proceedings of the Spa Conference, 'based on official documents,' and therefore authoritative. But of its true history, which no one knows, or will know, like the true history of the Paris Peace Conference, which no one can ever write, because it is compounded of countless unrecorded episodes, posterity will be ignorant. On the whole, good poetry is more reliable.

## SIR DOUGLAS HAIG

SOME IMPRESSIONS

BY LORD NORTHCLIFFE

From *The Times*, Aug. 5th, 1916

WHEN history relates the story of the great battles of the Somme, it will tell how Sir Douglas Haig and his Staff had their Headquarters in a modest dwelling, part of which was still occupied by the family who owned it.

Thus it is that the voices of children running up and down the corridors mingle with the ceaseless murmur of the guns and the work of the earnest little company of men whose labours are never out of the thoughts of their countrymen throughout the Empire.

The head of this band of brothers, the Commander-in-Chief of an Army ten times larger than that of the Great Duke, is Sir Douglas Haig, well known to his troops from the base to the front, though hardly known at all to the masses of his fellow-subjects at home.

In these days of instant communication by telephone, despatch rider, telegraph, or wireless, a greater part of the life of the Commander-in-Chief is spent at his Headquarter offices. In times of stress he rarely moves from them. Outwardly the life of Sir Douglas Haig might seem to be that of some great Scotch laird who chooses to direct his estates himself.

At exactly five and twenty minutes past eight each morning Sir Douglas joins his immediate Staff at the usual informal breakfast of English life. Though he has selected his Staff, without fear or favour, from the best elements of the British Armies that have been tried for two years in the field, there is something indefinably Scottish in the atmosphere of his table.

The Commander-in-Chief is of an ancient Scottish family born in the kingdom of Fife, so that the spear of our British offensive is tipped with that which is considered to be more adamant than the granite of Aberdeen. Lithe and alert, Sir Douglas is known for his distinguished bearing and good looks. He has blue eyes and an unusual facial angle, delicately-chiselled features, and a chin to be reckoned with. There is a characteristic movement of the hands when explaining things.

Sir Douglas does not waste words. It is not because he is silent or unsympathetic—it is because he uses words as he uses soldiers, sparingly, but always with method. When he is interested in his subject, as in talking of his gratitude to and admiration of the new armies and their officers, or in testifying to the stubborn bravery of the German machine-gunners, it is not difficult to discern from his accent that he is what is known North of the Tweed as a Fifer. A Fifer is one of the many types that have helped to build up the Empire, and is probably the best of all for dealing with the Prussian. First of all in the armoury of the Fifer is patience, then comes oblivion to all external surroundings and pressure, with a supreme concentration on the object to be attained. Fife is the home of the national game of Scotland; and it is the imperturbability of the Fifer that makes him so difficult to beat in golf, in affairs, and in war. Behind the dourness of the man of the East Coast is the splendid enthusiasm that occasion sometimes demands, though there is no undue depression or elation at an unexpected bunker or an even unusually fortunate round.

While I was with the little family party at Headquarters there came news that was good, and some that was not so good. Neither affected the Commander-in-Chief's attitude towards the war, nor the day's work, in the least degree whatever. There are all sorts of minor criticisms of the Commander-in-

Chief at home, mainly because the majority of the people know nothing about him. He is probably not interested in home comments, but is concerned that the Empire should know of the unprecedented valour of his officers and men. Consequently the doings of the Army are put before the world each day with the frankness that is part of Sir Douglas Haig's own character. He is opposed to secrecy except where military necessity occasions it. He dislikes secret reports on officers. Those who visit him are treated with great candour, and there is always a suitable selection of guests at Headquarters to bring variety to the meal-times of men who are engaged in their all-absorbing tasks. If they are interested in any particular part of the organisation, medical, transport, artillery, strategy, they are invited to ask questions and, if possible, to suggest. In many large houses of business there is a suggestion-box in which the staff or employees are invited to put forward their ideas in writing. I do not know whether there is such an institution in the Army, but certainly all sorts of new ideas are discussed at the table at General Headquarters. In every case 'Can it be done?' takes precedence of 'It can't be done.'

Nor, despite the fact that the Commander-in-Chief is a Cavalry officer, does he show any obsession with the arm with which the greater part of his military life has had to deal. Surrounded by a group of the best experts our Empire can provide, most of whom have had twenty-four months' war experience, he is in conference with them from morning till late at night. During his daily exercise ride he has one or other of his staff experts with him. The wonderful system of communication established throughout the length and breadth of his zone has linked up the whole military machine so effectively that information can be gained instantly from most distant and difficult parts of his line of operations or communications. In the ante-chambers of the Commander-in-

Chief's small working-room the telephone is rarely silent; and a journey into many parts of his Army proved to me that out of the two years' struggle have emerged men, and often very young men, able to do the Commander-in-Chief's bidding or to furnish him with what he desires. Out of the necessary chaos of a war that was unexpected, save by the Army and a few prescient students, have emerged Armies in which Scottish precision and courage, English dash and tenacity, Irish defiance and devotion, Australian and Canadian fierce gallantry all play their proper parts. Sir Douglas Haig is fifty-four years of age. Many of his staff are greatly his junior. They are a grave and serious body of men who have inspired confidence from one end of the line to the other. They are not dull, there is plenty of familiar badinage at the proper time. There is deep devotion and loyalty in their labours.

It is said that most of them have aged a little in their ceaseless round of work and anxiety, but they are all at a period of life when responsibility can best be borne. 'War,' says Sir Douglas Haig, 'is a young man's game.' He made that remark in regard to General Trenchard's young airmen, of whom all at the front are so proud. A soldier who had fought in the first battle of Ypres spoke to me of the Commander-in-Chief as follows:

It was just when the Germans had broken our line and little parties of our men were retreating. At that moment Sir Douglas Haig, then commanding the First Corps, came along the Menin road with an escort of his own 17th Lancers, all as beautifully turned out as in peace time. They approached slowly, and the effect upon our retreating men was instantaneous. As Sir Douglas advanced they gathered and followed him. In the event the Worcesters attacked Gheluvelt, which had been taken by the enemy, drove them out, and restored the line. The Commander-in-Chief's presence was, and is, a talisman of strength to his armies.

On the last night of my visit to this little company I was walking with one of his circle in the gardens, watching the flashing of the guns, which looked like summer lightning flickering continuously. We had been talking of many things other than war, though the war was never out of our ears, for the throbbing was perpetual. It was late, for the warm night was a temptation to sauntering and exchange of views.

As we passed through the hall on our way upstairs the door of the Commander-in-Chief's room was open. We paused for a moment to watch him bending over the map on which the whole world is gazing to-day, the map which he is slowly and surely altering for the benefit of civilisation and the generations unborn. He was about to begin his nightly vigil.

## CHARLES MASTERMAN

By A. G. GARDINER

From *The Nation*, Nov. 26th, 1927

*A. G. Gardiner, for twenty years the editor of the Daily News, is unequalled for his power of summarising character. He is a man of strong opinions, who writes as he sees and understands, and his sketches are brilliant in their judgment and their expression.*

THERE is one note that is common to all that has been written about the death of Charles Masterman. It is the note of lament that so brilliant a promise should have issued in failure. In a sense the verdict is true, though, instead of failure, I should write unfulfilment. Masterman's life was a tragedy of unfulfilment. It was a tragedy written in part by the perversity of

events, in part by his own fascinating but wayward character. Things went wrong without and within, and it would be difficult to say which had the greater share in the mournful result.

Few men in my time have come up with so radiant a dawn. It was not radiant in the sartorial sense that marked Disraeli's irruption into the world. He was indifferent to the niceties of dress, and in his young days was careless to the point of untidiness. When, commended to me by Canon Barnett, he came to see me nearly twenty-five years ago to discuss the idea of becoming literary editor of the *Daily News*, he wore an obsolete tall hat and buttoned boots that lacked half their buttons, and he carried a derelict handbag tied round with a piece of rope in place of fastening. In those days, fresh from Cambridge, he was living in a tenement in the slums of Camberwell with his friend, Reginald Bray, and his disregard of appearance seemed a part of his scheme of life. After his marriage, which was the one enduring happiness of his chequered career, his friends noticed a determined attempt to keep up appearances, but to the end no man ever gave less thought than he did to personal upholstery.

But he brought with him much rarer merchandise than a taste in clothes. You forgot what he was wearing in the presence of that vivid personality, with the ready, boyish laugh, the eager, sensitive talk, the quick, various intelligence. You could not be with him for five minutes, then or afterwards, without the knowledge that you were in the presence of a remarkable man. 'Where O'Flaherty sits is the head of the table,' and where Masterman was the orbit of talk revolved. Social London welcomed him at once. All doors were open to him, and any career seemed within his grasp, for he could write, and he could talk, and he could think, and, when he chose to exercise it, he had a charm that disarmed all antagonism. The political leaders smiled upon this brilliant new



recruit, and the bishops opened their arms to one who was so conspicuously ecclesiastical in his sympathies. 'Masterman,' said Leonard Hobhouse in those days, 'never replies to letters from anybody less than an Archbishop,' And John Burns gave his own characteristic comment on Masterman's clerical tendencies when, replying in the lobby to someone who asked him about some question of waterworks, he said, 'See Masterman about it. I leave all the christenings to my curate.'

He had one consuming passion, the alleviation of the condition of the people. Whether the motive of that passion was love or pity I do not know, but it was the masterkey of his activities, and gave his life, through all its vicissitudes, coherence and unity. There was, beneath that hearty laughter and vivacious talk, a vein of deep and abiding melancholy, and his vision of the general life was coloured by that fact. Joy was a fleeting illusion playing over the tragic comedy of man, and his emotions were strained and tortured by the agony of things. His speech came from bitter springs, from the sense of wrong and suffering in all their shapes:

'. . . . The whole of the world's tears,  
And all the trouble of her labouring ships,  
And all the trouble of her myriad years.'

Nothing but action, the sense of achievement, the feeling that he was in the forefront of a triumphant crusade, could give peace to that urgency of spirit. In the beginning he had that satisfaction. There was never a more joyous colleague than he was in those unforgettable days that preceded and accompanied the great Liberal revival of 1906 when everything seemed possible and all the political earth was full of the coming of spring, and when Masterman, now deep in the counsels of the party, was running neck and neck with Churchill as the man of the future. Sometimes Churchill would come in to see Masterman, and in the high spirits of that time would accept

a challenge to finish the leader on which Masterman was engaged. My only quarrel with Masterman then, as always, was that he wrote at inordinate length, for fluency whether with pen or tongue was his besetting sin.

And when he entered the Government the fulfilment of all our hopes as well as his own peace seemed assured. He discovered at once a first-class Parliamentary genius, for he had two gifts rarely found in combination. He had the emotion and passion that gave imaginative sweep to his thought, but he had also, what we had not suspected, a surprisingly acute and practical mind for the details of legislation and the swift cut-and-thrust of the Parliamentary encounter. He could pick his way through the mazes of a Bill with a swiftness and sureness that few men in our time have equalled. He saw not only the wood, but the trees, and his mind swooped on the crucial point of a tangled issue with masterful certainty. He had his chance for the full display of his powers over the Insurance Bill, and the part he played in the passage of that vast, complicated, and bitterly fought measure entitles him to be remembered as something more than a brilliant failure.

But his success in that great struggle was largely his undoing. It gave the impulse to the perverse Fate that henceforth dogged his footsteps to the end. He had previously lost his seat at North-West Ham through a technical illegality on the part of his agent, and had gone to Bethnal Green where a vacancy had been made for him. Then followed the most cruel and envenomed by-election in my experience. It is difficult to-day, when the Insurance Act is accepted as one of the most indisputable triumphs of modern legislation, to recall the insane fury its passage aroused. All that fury, organised by the *Daily Mail*, was focused on the Minister who had been one of its two most formidable protagonists, and Masterman fell before the infamous avalanche of mud and defamation.

From that disaster his fortunes never recovered. He failed

to get back to the House, and though he retained his seat in the Cabinet until the war, it was not until twelve years after that for one brief session he sat in Parliament again. Although in the interval he had done invaluable work as Chairman of the Insurance Commissioners and as the head of the Wellington House department during the war, his divorce from active politics had left him a profoundly disappointed man. The political battlefield was the breath of his nostrils. Out of the fighting line he drooped and wilted and became a prey to that sombre contemplation of life which was habitual to him. The smell of powder that came with his brief return to the House in 1923 acted on him like magic, and he instantly recovered his position in the front rank of debate, while the mordant sketches of Parliament which he contributed to *The Nation* revealed another of his many-sided gifts. Then the curtain fell again and now we know the eclipse was final.

But though events played the leading part in wrecking his career, it must be admitted that character was a contributory factor. Both temperamentally and physically he was ill-equipped for the struggle of life. If he had been made of harder metal he would have ridden the wave of external misfortune triumphantly, for his gifts of mind were so various and distinguished that he could have carved out any future for himself. But he was a man of moods, and he carried too much sail of emotion for his mental and physical capacity. It has been said that life is a comedy to him who thinks and a tragedy to him who feels, and in Masterman feeling always had the whip-hand of calculation. He was scornful of the sordidness of life and spent himself with a royal recklessness of consequences—even as a challenge to consequences—for he gave most freely where he could not receive, and, with a certain perversity, wounded where self-interest would have counselled complaisance. And the vein of dolour that was in him was aggravated by physical disablement that in time reacted

on the spirit and filled his mind with shapes of gloom. From these abysses he would emerge in congenial company with all his old incisive power and joyous laughter, his boyish rhapsodies and his withering scorn. Those of us who knew him and loved him, 'wart and all,' will remember him by those bursts of sunshine that came through the cloud that overshadowed one of the finest minds and one of the most generous souls of this generation.

## NOEL COWARD

By G. B. STERN

From the *Woman's Journal*, March, 1928

*Miss G. B. Stern is a novelist rather than a journalist, though she is a frequent contributor to the newspaper press. She is a woman with a genius for friendship and a faculty for understanding, and particularly for the detection of shams.*

THERE are so many who are ready to demand eagerly, 'How will he bear failure?' and so few who recognise an even more poignant question awaiting answer, 'How will he bear success?'

And so we are watching Noel Coward breathlessly.

'I think it is so marvellous of him not to become spoilt!' And: 'People are such cows!' impatiently, from Noel. 'Why should I get spoilt? I haven't done anything, really, yet.' This is not false modesty. He can take his own measure, and take it accurately. Eight years ago, when Noel, like Fortunatus of the fairy tale, was poor and almost unknown, he predicted his present with such impudent confidence that one could believe that his pockets were already bulging with contracts. He looked possessively at the stars and desired a fistful. Now he

has got his fistful, and more. Had he been merely clever and ambitious, the quest would have ended there. But he looked at the moon as well, and he is still longing for his slice of the moon; he will long for it until he dies. For he is not, thank goodness, of the stuff of which content is made.

Moons. And a sudden memory of a headland in Cornwall pushed out in black rocky outline against the silvery metal of the Atlantic. Night after night while the moon was round Noel made that headland his platform, and entertained us, an audience of three, squatting and sprawling on the short, dry thymy grass. Bare legs, flannel bags rolled up, an old grey sweater splashed with ink, silk handkerchief knotted tightly round his head; forlorn as the eternal Pierrot; mischievous as the faun he so closely resembles; not all the follies nor the Co-optimists nor the Bow-wows ever provided such tireless entertainment as Noel, in those days, for his friends. Swaggering and singing along the cliff path, leader of the Indian file, and always the same jingle:

‘Sing me a song  
Of a lad that is gone.  
Say, can that lad be I?’

Memory takes a tricky delight, it seems, in tilting the most cynical of us into a bog of sploshy symbolism. For it is sheer hard truth that Noel perpetually sang that song of Robert Louis’ eight years ago.

Incidentally, he nearly got killed on that especial holiday; killed in cold blood by the other three of our quartet. We had rented one small sitting-room in the cottage on the headland, and there was a sea-fog which lasted five days, closely wrapped round the door and windows, muffling out sound and light. The fog siren moaned every two minutes, day and night, and we all went melancholy and Grand Guignolish and Light-house-keeperish—all except Noel who, on the contrary, talked

gaily and incessantly, and wrote plays, and read them to us—and read them to us—and wrote parodies of our writings—and read them to us. Happy, light-hearted boy. There was a sword hanging on the wall, a relic of the Great War; I still do not know how Noel survived—perhaps because our landlady took the law and the lobster into her own hands. The lobster was alive, and she chased him with it, he screaming wildly and in full flight, several times round and round the table. To this day, here is the one episode over which Noel has lost his sense of the ridiculous. If you mention it, he will remark with curt and icy emphasis: ‘That was an excessively silly and dangerous performance of hers!’

When I say that Noel wrote ‘plays,’ in the plural, during our five days’ imprisonment, I am trying to emphasise the fact that thus and always, at such lightning speed, has he written his plays, before anyone has heard of them or of him. He has been severely snubbed for this method, probably because the critics believe that it is the result of too much careless confidence engendered by success, a recent attitude of oh-anything-will-do. He is far from believing that anything will do. Yet if he were banished to a desert island for a year, with the injunction that this whole year must be spent in writing one play, and one alone, I am ready to bet that he would finish it within seven days, with fifty-one weeks left over in which to paddle and eat yams.

When he said to me some eighteen months ago, ‘I’ve had enough now. I’ve simply got to get away and have time to read, and time to see my friends, and find out if I really *can* write; if there’s anything in me that’s good!’—when he said that, and obviously meant it, for Noel is further from being a hypocrite than any other person I know, I must confess I was wildly glad; it may be selfishly, because I came under the heading of ‘see my friends’—and we don’t see much of Noel nowadays. Fortunatus has not ‘grown proud,’ but he is surrounded,

and one has to call to him over the heads of the multitude. Yet I think that part of my gladness was due to immense relief that he should recognise clearly the need to get right away from the tumult and the rockets and the shouting.

Well, but he has not gone. Not yet.

Noel apparently cannot help being spectacular. He enjoys it, of course. He excels in the difficult art of self-production; and in the game of scoring off his opponent he is a master. It is as difficult to get even with him as it is to catch quicksilver in a butterfly net. I have still to be avenged for his pretty dedication of 'The Queen was in the Parlour,' to 'G. B. Stern. Without Whom——' Because of all his plays I had liked it least, and had dared to scoff at it, remarking that the characters were either first cousins to Colonel Sapt or had gone to school with Rupert of Hentzau. Noel had the supreme cheek to introduce that very speech into the play, where it enjoyed a quiet success of its own.

His minor devilries are countless. He has a habit, startling before you become aware of it, of signing his letters by every distinguished name except his own. Many letters have I received from 'Harriet Beecher Stowe,' from 'Charlotte M. Yonge,' from 'Arnold Bennett,' from 'Cordelia Rhubarb' (unknown), and from 'Benjamin Disraeli.' ('How very nice for you, dear, to know Arnold Bennett so well!' once said a sweet old lady of my acquaintance. Silently I handed her the letter. She remained stunned by 'Mr. Bennett's' free and youthful audacities.)

Once upon a time, Noel wrote me a letter which, paraphrasing the platitudes of mild village gossip, ended with the remark: 'And isn't it *too* dreadful about poor Rebecca West?' As it happened, I had not heard from my friend Rebecca West for several weeks, and somehow or other I forgot my little Noel's nonchalant ways of being amusing, and became anxious. I sent off telegrams at once to her, and to her sister,

and to Noel himself, imploring them to let me know immediately what esoteric disaster this was? That afternoon I was due to give a lecture, but my discourse was haunted by lurid mental pictures interpreting 'Isn't it too dreadful. . .?' The post office closed early, and I worried all night. The next morning, however, four telegrams were handed to me. The first that I opened, from Miss West's sister, was both surprising and reassuring: the victim of my scare was apparently well, happy, and away on a holiday. The other three telegrams were as follows:

'Isn't it too, too dreadful about Geoffrey Moss?—May Sinclair.'

'Isn't it too frightful about Berta Ruck?—Rose Macaulay.'

'Isn't it too terribly sad about Noel Coward?—E. M. Dell.'

'Noel Coward' was a name quite unknown to me when I first saw it at the foot of a letter, in the summer of 1917. He was in hospital, and he wrote fairly deferentially asking if he might come down to Cornwall to see me. As we had never met, I naturally questioned, in my gracious reply to his importunity, how I was to distinguish him at the station? The answer came:

'Arriving Padstow 6.45. Slim and divinely handsome in grey.'

The rather literal members of the house-party with whom I was staying voted that the stranger must be 'impossibly conceited'—so that when he arrived, as chubbily expectant as any Fauntleroy of being welcomed and loved on sight, he was coldly boycotted.

. . . 'Sing me a song of a lad that is gone'—Noel is twenty-eight. I think I am rather tired of the boy legend. 'Noel Coward, Not Yet Twenty-One' has become a catch-phrase. I have a photograph which he has winsomely signed with these very words, knowing how they exasperate me. That was at the time of *I'll Leave It to You*, his first play to be produced.



Even after *The Vortex*, the swelling chorus still rose: 'Not Yet Twenty-Five!' He must have had enough, now, of being an infant phenomenon. It is partly his own fault; he will always be an irresistible playmonger. We are all children—but his games are necessarily played in full limelight. Yet he has developed unbelievably from that charming, insolent, callous youngster of our first Cornish encounter: swift to give offence; totally intolerant of any less brilliant, less nimble, point of view than his own; anti-conventional, anti-hearty, anti-respectable. Now he is a man, to be judged as a man. Now he is aware of a limitless journey still to go; whereas the boy was superbly confident of having practically arrived and settled in with his trunks.

I have already said that all his plays are sermons, if you read or hear them without prejudice. Noel's greatest sermons are yet to be written. They will be written. He has still to rid himself of one or two old-fashioned obsessions, such as that ladies of Easy Virtue are always in the right; or that priggish husbands must always be in the wrong. There are times when the contrary is true in both cases!

Yet I doubt if any drama that he can write will ever be comparable to the psychological drama of his own amazing rise to notoriety. Notoriety—as separate from fame—is his attendant demon, and no less a perpetual test than a perpetual menace. How will he react to it? How has he reacted to it? He was too popular; now for the moment, since *Home Chat* and *Sirocco*, he is too unpopular. He will be too popular again. Everything is ladled out to him in exaggerated quantities. The ordeal that he underwent at the first-night of *Sirocco* was unfair, and wholly atmospherical. It had very little to do with the play, of which, anyhow, the point and moral were strangely misunderstood. There was a sort of mutter in the air, a French Revolution feeling, a Thumbs-down-for-the-Gladiator feeling. And if this is melodrama, then, on the other swing of

the pendulum, what else was that sensational first-night of *The Vortex*, three years ago, when the crying, cheering, stamping, raving audience did not know which to acclaim first, actor or author? What about the wild ensuing rush at the box-office; and the five West-End managers who quarrelled for the privilege of producing the play; and later on, a first-night in New York which has not been equalled for enthusiasm for twenty years, so Americans themselves have told me?

It is among the most ancient of human instincts to shout: 'Down with the favourite!' Often, if the favourite be of poor stuff, he succumbs weakly to antagonism, as previously he had grown swollen with adulation. Noel, having a quality of real greatness in him, has not proved vulnerable, in either case. He is gifted with the common sense, the sense of humour, and the sense of himself, which are his Cap of Safety, his Sandals of Swiftmess, and his Cloak of Invisibility. With these weapons he has conquered the perils of success. The perils of temporary failure he can meet with a simpler weapon. For beneath his superficial manner of mocking at defeat, he is a man of strong and dogged courage. And he is so fashioned in character, and caressed by destiny, that he will never be forced to combat the worst misfortune of all: the misfortune of being mediocre.



## LITERARY



## THE BLAKE MEMORIAL

By E. B. OSBORN

From the *Morning Post*, 1927

*E. B. Osborn, the literary editor of the Morning Post, is a man of vast knowledge and limitless interests. He has led a life of varied adventure, and knows as much about prize-fighters as he knows about poets.*

It is in the elemental and eternal necessities of human life—in the marrow of what is called the commonplace—that the greatest poetry of all arises to satisfy the thirst and hunger of the soul. This is the poetry which stands between Love and Death, holding a hand of each—which illustrates man to himself as a creature with one foot in Time and the other in Eternity. It may be the work of famous poets in their singing-robes edged with historic purple, or of unnamed spirits whose rosaries were the falling of tears unrecked of. It cries out of the dust, it speaks from old walls of the habitations of men, it lives on the lips of little children and unlettered toilers. It may preserve the memory of a great nation's greatest age, or the culmination of a triumphant creed, in a stately fabric of frozen music. It may also rebuke the might of empires with a simple song, and with a little lilting refrain, sweet and serviceable as wild roses, lift away the burden of Nineveh from bowed shoulders. It is a miracle which makes words stronger than stones and more dauntless than deeds—and who, in the long lineage of English poets from the author of *Pearl?* and CHAUCER to KIPLING AND HARDY, has more miraculously wrought it than the mystical BLAKE, the centenary of whose death, being his entrance into full immortality, is to be cele-

brated this year? It is well for us, if it matters nothing to that singer in his eternal ecstasy, that a memorial is to be set up in his honour in St. Paul's Cathedral. When the ceremony of its unveiling takes place, let us hope the Holy Innocents will be there in their multitudes to acclaim the author of *Songs of Innocence*, so that the scene can be described in his own lines:

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,  
The children walking two and two, in red and blue and green,  
Grey-headed beadles walked before, with wands as white as  
snow,

Till into the high dome of Paul's they like 'Thames' water flow.

If it could be so, we could e'en dispense with addresses from arch-critics, those beadles of literature who never honour a KEATS or a BLAKE till he is dead a long time.

The truth is that BLAKE needs no memorial of stone or marble or brass. It were better, perhaps, to spend the moneys collected for this gratification of the centenary habit on distributing free copies, especially to young people, of a selection of his best poems illustrated with examples of his best drawings. It need be only a little book—for much of what he wrote, like the story of his vague and vexed life, may be given as alms to oblivion. His epics, it is true, which tended, as he himself said, to harden into 'vast petrific forms,' have at times a singular impressiveness. The episodes and personages thereof pass with the majesty of clouds in an open sky; there are the remote pulsations of the sea, tears of eternity ranged against us, as he heard them in his Felpham cottage, in the *Book of Los* and the other expressions of a resounding symbolism. For the professional critic a study of all his work is worth while, since it takes one into the work-shop of a poet's mind, showing how, contrary to the general belief, he worked with the file, to perfect even the result of a lyrical inspiration. How often his modern imitators fall into the dreadful gulf between *simplesse* and *simplicité* (the French words are necessary) when

they proceed on the assumption that he wrote in a rapture of carelessness! His finest lyrics, as we remember them in their final form, are examples of *curiosa felicitas*. Such is the case with the wonderful *Tiger! Tiger! burning bright*, to which, by the way, a magnificent parallel may be found in the late JULIAN GRENFELL's poem on a black greyhound. Some of his lyrics are of childhood, however, which have the piercing sweetness of a blackbird's last brief rhapsody in the glimmering dusk, were as swiftly and suddenly distilled as a tear or a laugh. And when the mood moved in him he could make a poetic aphorism with a wise economy of words unequalled except in EMERSON's verse, occasionally. Thus his burning hatred of cruelty, especially in forms sanctioned by tyrannical custom, is crystallised for ever in the couplet:

A robin redbreast in a cage  
Puts all Heaven in a rage.

Even so, in *Never Seek to Tell Thy Love* he finds the one and only metaphor for the miraculous at-one-ment of mutual passion:

For the gentle wind doth move  
Silently, invisibly.

His poetry, too, takes us 'with a sigh,' and that is why the secret of its fascination, which young children can always feel, is so often beyond critical analysis. He was a true Mystic, the voice of one singing in the blest wilderness above and beyond the authority of Reason. He may rank only as one of the Muse's minor immortals, yet no other English poet has so clearly shown us the beauty and majesty at the heart of the commonplace, teaching us:

To see a world in a grain of sand,  
And a Heaven in a wild flower;  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,  
An Eternity in an hour.

Let these lines be graved on his memorial.



## GOOD OLD TIMES WERE BAD OLD TIMES

BY ARNOLD BENNETT

From the *Evening Standard*

*Arnold Bennett was an unemotional and ironic observer of the drama of life. He started life by being a journalist. He became one of the master novelists of his time, and he remained a gifted journalist. He was very sure of himself, very positive, always interesting. It may be said of him that in his journalism he laid down the law, but that he always did it with an air.*

At the turn of the year one does extraordinary things—whether under the influence of the stars or from mere wild impulse I know not. I read some history. Always I am advising people to read history, and seldom reading it myself.

The value of reading history is fourfold. First, it teaches you that the good old times were the bad old times, and therefore that the world is improving, despite the Jeremiads of disgruntled persons who, if they had lived a hundred years ago, would have wanted to live five hundred years ago, and if they had lived five hundred years ago would have wanted to live two thousand years ago, and if they had been contemporaries of Homer would have looked back with regret to the simplicities of the Stone Age.

Secondly, it teaches you that the passion for cruelty has steadily decreased and respect for human life steadily increased.

Thirdly, it teaches you that human motives have been the same in all centuries, likewise the myopic vision of great men and their obstinacy in refusing to take advice. And fourthly, it teaches you that ignorance, stupidity, and lack of imagination are the root of all the ills mankind suffers from.

I might add a fifthly, to wit, that nations will never get a fair chance on this earth until politicians and general and Civil Service mandarins are compelled, before taking office, to pass a stiff examination in universal history.

800 PAGES

'I think it was Ranke who said, "No history can be written except universal history," meaning, of course, that all history is one, and no part of it can be written without reference to all the rest.' A large order, but things are what they are, and the consequences of air-tight compartments will be what they will be. So why deceive ourselves?

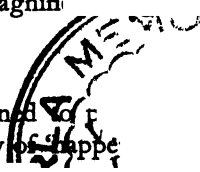
Speaking of my history-reading. I doubt whether I have ever read a long historical work right through, except H. G. Wells's *The Outline of History*, and Gibbon. But I have made magnificent beginnings. I once started on a huge French work, *General History from the Fourth Century to the Present Time*, written and compiled under the direction of the great Ernest Lavisse and the lesser Yveling Rambaud.

I read the first volume (800 terrific pages) and conscientiously made notes upon the same, which serried notes (amounting to thousands of words) still stand in proof of my industry. But the remaining eleven volumes I have not opened to this day.

Then I started the *Cambridge Modern History*. I was enthralled by the introduction and the two preliminary essays, which, however, were so brilliant and so enlightening that they rendered the rest of the first volume by comparison dull and hard reading. As for the succeeding volumes, I know them about as well as a traveller whose ship calls at O for two hours knows Portugal. My other magnificences I will not trouble you with.

HOMICIDAL CRUELTY

Well, at the turn of the year, I happened to open a volume of Froude. (Conceive the effrontery of happen-



pick up' an author of genius!) It was *The Reign of Mary Tudor*. People usually speak of only the commencement (*Henry the Eighth*) and the close (*Elizabeth*) of Froude's study of sixty years of sixteenth-century England. But I would maintain that the middle part of it is of tremendous interest. The smallish book on Mary's reign has held me as firmly as any novel I have read for years.

Few historians have been more severely criticised than Froude. In particular he has been accused of a marked bias in favour of Protestantism as against the Papacy. I have not observed this bias in *Mary* where there was plenty of room and excuse for it.

Nor am I persuaded that Froude is more inaccurate than historians are apt to be. I would animadvert only upon the quality of Froude's writing, which is often as wild as was my sudden impulse to read him.

But what descriptive power, what emotion of sympathy or antipathy, what breadth of view he has! and his raw material in the reign of Mary was not surpassed by that of the greater reigns.

A virgin approaching the forties, badly advised and self-willed, who had hysterically convinced herself that she was in love with a man she had never seen! A Lady Jane Grey—the outstanding pathetic figure of English history—driven to the headsman's block at seventeen! The battle between Mary and Parliament, which Mary won and Parliament lost because she had the Tudor masculine courage and ability to stand up unaided to a situation! The all-pervading homicidal cruelty of the time, the victims only waiting a chance to be as cruel to their oppressors as their oppressors were to them! and the final tragedy of the appalling reign.

Yes, *The Reign of Mary Tudor* can be read. And it is not a bed-book, because too exciting. Foreign critics have called Froude too English. He may have been for foreigners, but

nevertheless he had the world-vision (and there is something to be said for Elizabethan England being the centre of the Western world).

Not that I am an ardent partisan of English historians. I prefer foreign historians—for my own good and advancement in broad understanding. With the possible exception of Gibbon, I doubt whether we have had an historian on the level of the greatest foreign historians.

And even Gibbon—well, if I had to guide a would-be student of Rome I would counsel him to read Ferrero before reading Gibbon. Ferrero's *Greatness and Decline of Rome* is not a better book than *The Decline and Fall*. It is not so good a book.

But it is much shorter, and it 'reads itself,' which Gibbon certainly does not. And it is written—to the extreme of vividness—with modern problems always in mind. No one can read Ferrero without deriving from him a finer and wider comprehension of the age of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, and a keener sense of the liveliness of life itself. But who is Ferrero and who is Gibbon to compare with Mommsen? There are two absolutely great nineteenth-century historians. One is Mommsen, and the other is Ranke (*History of the Popes, History of England*, etc.). There may be others, but I know not of them.

#### SO HUMAN

I have read a lot of Mommsen, and not a quarter enough of Ranke. I have yet to meet the equals, anywhere, of these two. They may be majestic—they are intensely readable. They have colour, picturesqueness, drama, solid wisdom, and very few prejudices.

Do not shy at the name, for instance, of Mommsen. You may obtain him in the reassuring Everyman Library, with a long introduction by Freeman (the man who attempted and failed to slay Froude). Try Mommsen, and when you have

recovered from the intoxication of him, try Ranke. You will then know what first-rate history is.

If you ask why you, a Briton, should read about Rome and Italy, I should reply, 'Why not?' The modern world is based on Rome.

Besides, you can learn as much from the history of any one age as from the history of any other age. All history is one, because all history is human. And first-rate historical writing is exceedingly rare.

## THE LITTLE LANGUAGE

BY GERALD GOULD

From *The Observer*, Dec. 9th, 1928

*Gerald Gould was at one time editor of the Daily Herald, but literature is his real kingdom, not politics. He has almost made a corner in the criticism of fiction, one of the most expert jobs, be it added, in the world of the newspaper. It may sometimes be thought that he over-praises the good. But it cannot be said that he ever praises the bad.*

WHEN Swift wrote 'An't you sauceboxes to write *lele*, like Presto?' his meaning was doubtless perfectly clear. He had for MD a 'little language,' which was understood. But a little language is a dangerous thing. When broadcast, it is apt to trickle exiguously. Mr. James Joyce says with commendable firmness: 'Icis on us! Seints of light! Zezerel Subdue your noise, you hamble creature! What is it but a blackburry growth or the dwyergray ass them four old codgers owns? Are you meanam Tarpey and Lyons and Gregory? I meyne now, thank all, the four of them, and the roar of them. . . .' But I don't know what he meynes, nor what he is meanam. It

looks as if he had a spelling-bee in his bonnet, and had got confused by the buzz. Perhaps there were three bees, Tarpey and Lyons and Gregory, and the four of them made the roar of them. . . . Let us turn for advice to Mr. Padraic Colum, who tells us in a preface that '*Anna Livia Plurabelle* is concerned with the flowing of a River.' He adds that it is 'epical in its largeness of meaning and its multiplicity of interest.' And he praises, possibly to excess, 'James Joyce's inventions and discoveries as an innovator in literary form.' But I doubt whether it is really an invention to burble, since all babies do it: and it is no discovery that, if you make a noise like a carrot, there are creatures who will simply eat it. 'There will be many interpretations,' says Mr. Colum, 'of *Anna Livia Plurabelle*,' but I think he exaggerates. I think most people will get it in one. However, lest I do injustice, I will quote in full a remarkable passage which Mr. Colum himself selects as giving beautifully the flow of water:

She says herself she hardly knows whuon the annals her graveller was, a dynast of Leinster, a wolf of the sea, or what he did or how blyth she played or how, when, why, where and who offon he jumpnad her. She was just a young thin pale soft shy slim slip of a thing then, sauntering, by silvamoons-lake and he was a heavy trudging lurching lieabroad of a Curraghman, making his hay for whose sun to shine on, as tough as the oaktrees (peats be with them!) used to rustle that time down by the dykes of killing Kildare, for forstfellfoss with a plash across her.

The objection to this sort of writing is its fundamental (and no doubt unconscious) aesthetic dishonesty. It shirks the difficulties,—and pretends to have transcended them, as the tortoise pretended to have won the race for which he had never entered. It says: 'Young thin pale soft shy slim slip,' which is a mere accumulation of epithets, but perfectly clear; and then, dreading comparison with the genuine art which could get the same effect by the legitimate magic of phrase, it

confuses the issue with rubbish. The result would gravel anybody; and 'she says herself she hardly knows whuon the annals her graveller was.' The only water it all suggests to me is water on the brain. I feel inclined to say to Mr. Joyce: 'Subdue your noise, you hamble creature!' For hamble is as hamble does. However, peats be with him! But isn't he a saucebox, to write *lele*, like Presto?

## HANS ANDERSEN

By J. C. SQUIRE

From *The Observer*, Nov. 23rd, 1930

*J. C. Squire is a man of many parts, and every part that he plays, he plays well. His judgment is well balanced, his taste is unimpeachable, and his sincerity both as critic and as man, very evident. Among his other achievements, Squire has written what to me are the deftest and most successful verse parodies produced in this generation. Incidentally he is the captain of a team of literary cricketers. It is years since Squire left Cambridge, but he still possesses some of the pleasantest qualities of the undergraduate.*

I HAVE met people who have told me that they couldn't read Andersen when they were children, because he was too bathed in melancholy sentiment. That, certainly, was not my own experience, and if he is more to me now than he was when I was young, it is simply because the book has now the added appeal of being a part of one's own 'far away and long ago' as well as everything it was then. All the stories are here, the fantastic fairy tales and the touching novelettes, but there is another story which comes to mind when I look at the covers, or even hear mention of that vast benevolent name, Hans

Christian Andersen. It is the story of a child who was always alone with some book or other, and who through this one was translated into a country which in memory he seems actually to have visited in the flesh—a country of pine-forests, lakes, and turreted castles, gabled streets silver and black in moonlight, grey sad shores, witches and strutting grenadiers, ducks, loquacious storks and proud soaring swans, immured kings' daughters, and everywhere enchanting voices, sweetly sorrowful or quaintly croaking, voices of wind and tree and water, of beast and bird, of the frog in the pool and the mouse in the hole and the broken doll in the abandoned nursery.

There were other countries, too, equally beloved in their way: the country of Grimm was adjoining, and one forest blended into another, but the inhabitants were different, the woodcutters, millers, and soldiers more rough in their simplicity, the princes and princesses more prone to fierce cruelty, the stabbings and slicings more painfully realistic. And there was the quite different country—seldom, I think, visited by modern children—of Madame d'Aulnoy, full of palaces luxurious beyond the dreams of Louis XIV, golden coaches, dresses covered with diamonds and pearls, caskets from which streamed blinding cataracts of rubies and emeralds, a country where if anybody was turned into a cat by a wicked fairy, one feels that the cat would be an expensive Persian one, and the fairy closely related to the fairies of pantomime. But it was Andersen who was the poet; it was Andersen who fostered poets; and, for myself (though I don't know if I speak for others), I know that some little princess or mermaid in Andersen first made me feel the pain and the sweetness of love long before any pair of eyes in the actual world around me had ever caused me the slightest confusion.



## THOMAS HARDY, 1840-1928

BY SIR EDMUND GOSSE

From the *Sunday Times*

*Sir Edmund Gosse's knowledge of literature was encyclopaedic, and his taste was impeccable. Perhaps at the end of his distinguished career he pontificated rather than criticised, but his literary essays remain a safe guide to enjoyment.*

ON a solemn occasion in 1784 Gerard Hamilton wrote: 'Samuel Johnson is dead. Let us go to the next best: there is nobody!' We should do a grave injustice to several younger veterans of genius if we declared that nobody can take the place of Thomas Hardy, since one or other of them will presently slip into pre-eminence. But, for the moment, there is no visible head to the profession of Letters in this country. The throne is vacant, and Literature is gravely bereaved.

It would be conventional, it would even be insincere, to allege that Literature has 'lost' anything by Hardy's death. He preserved to a very great, perhaps to an unprecedented, age the power of expression, and it will be found that even in his 88th year he added something to his life's achievement. But practically his work was over; the cup was drained to its final drop, although the wine was excellent to the last. It is not in actual production that we have anything to regret; the loss is in the presence of the man himself, in his dignified and beautiful position as the unquestioned representative of living English Literature. Till last Wednesday, if an Englishman of culture was asked, 'Who is the present head of your Literature?' instinctively, without fear of discussion, he answered: 'Why, of course, Thomas Hardy!'

\* \* \* \* \*

It is of great benefit to the intellectual life of a country that the years of a very great writer should be prolonged. It brings all other manifestations of talent into focus; it gives them proportion. In the case of Hardy, everything contrived to give dignity to his situation. His modesty, his serenity, his equipoise of taste, combined with the really extraordinary persistence of his sympathy and curiosity, made him an object of affectionate respect to old and young alike. He had outlived all adverse comment; he seemed to have entered into immortality without ceasing to be the simplest of mortals. It has been my privilege to enjoy his friendship for fifty-three years—a long span—and all through that time I have watched with care the development of his fame, which was at one time grossly and fanatically attacked. Looking back over that long period, I am struck by the concinnity of his intellectual career. In his calmness, in his retirement, in his rigorous probity, he was always unconsciously preparing for revered length of days and for an unchallenged predominance.

This is not the moment for making a pronouncement about the character of Hardy's works in detail. They will occupy a hundred pens, and will be subjected to close analysis by every variety of commentator. It is the fashion to over-estimate his poetry, which will require to be sifted and selected. It is the fashion to underrate his novels, which form a solid contribution to the monument of English Literature. Criticism will hold the balance more evenly, and will show that this remarkable man was equally distinguished in the two arts of prose and verse. He kept the two completely distinct, yet always closely related.

\* \* \* \* \*

In both there is dominant the note of what he very much disliked to hear called 'pessimism,' but what may be more accurately defined in words of his own as 'the sad science of renunciation.' He needed all the natural magic of his genius

to prevent his work, interpenetrated as it was by this resigned and hopeless melancholy, from becoming sterile, but joy streamed into it from other sources—the joy of observation, of sympathy, of humour. Yet, after all, the core of Hardy's genius was austere and tragical, and this has to be taken into consideration, and weighed in every estimate of his writings. It was a curious fact, and difficult to explain, that this obvious aspect of his temperament was the one which he firmly refused to contemplate. The author of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* conceived himself to be an optimist.

\* \* \* \* \*

The external life of Thomas Hardy was uneventful to the last degree. He took a quiet part in the local business of the province which he made so illustrious. He travelled little; he made few and unobtrusive public appearances; he neither shrank from company nor courted it. Those who saw him superficially thought him unexhilarating; to appreciate his wit and wisdom it was desirable to be alone with him. The close of his life was extremely serene, and I think perfectly happy. He was the object of devoted care and the closest sympathetic attention. Of this I must beware of saying too much:

If this be she who, gentlest of the wise,  
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured, the departed One,  
Let me not vex with inharmonious sighs  
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

## FRANCIS THOMPSON AS I KNEW HIM

BY WILFRED WHITTEN

From *John o' London's Weekly*, July 10th, 1926

*Wilfred Whitten and I were concerned together for over five years in the running of John o' London's Weekly. Whitten has an immense knowledge of literature and of literary history, and he is one of the most gifted writers of his time with a far smaller popular reputation than he deserves. This is a matter of indifference to Whitten. He is the old-time Bohemian. To him there is no difference between twelve o'clock noon and twelve o'clock midnight, or between Monday morning and Thursday afternoon. He writes when the spirit moves him, and the spirit always moves him to write abundantly well.*

FRANCIS THOMPSON, the author of *The Hound of Heaven*, died in the dawn of November 13, 1907. To his old friend and rescuer, Wilfrid Meynell, he had said, 'Yes, Wilfrid, I am more ill than you think. I am dying from laudanum poisoning.' Such was the end of a great poet and the gentlest of seers.

### THE 'ACADEMY'

Francis Thompson was, and remains, the most memorable man I have ever met. Not often, yet not seldom, we took counsel together. Among the things at which Solomon marvelled he did not include the way of one man with another when they talk under the sun; yet this can be almost the greatest experience of life and the least recordable. Next door to the old *Academy* office, at 43 Chancery Lane, opposite that brick gateway that Shakespeare knew, there was a small wine shop. Thither 'Francis' and I would sometimes go on a

Friday evening and talk of things, past, present, and to come. The nook to the left of the door which was our private forum has been done away with; thus do they 'pillage man's ancient heart.' I wish I could remember a single word of Thompson's talk in that place, but I cannot remember more than a fine monologue from his lips on *Don Quixote*. He was all amenable, and one could set one's mind against his and be richly rewarded. I have also wished that I had not dropped scores of Thompson's manuscripts, after they had come back from the printer, into our waste-paper basket, but this, too, was natural; it would never have occurred to us to preserve our Pharaoh to be sold for balsams. Before that time the *Academy*, which had been for almost half a century an organ of scholarship, and, as such, read in even foreign universities, had somehow languished to a point when it could not be continued in that form. The journal was acquired by Mr. John Morgan Richards, who purchased it, I believe, in fatherly compliment to his daughter, Mrs. Craigie, better known then and now as 'John Oliver Hobbes.' My six years' service as an assistant editor was entirely due to my old friend, Mr. Lewis Hind.

## IN 1897

Thus I came into contact with not a few remarkable writers. These included E. V. Lucas (whom, however, I had known intimately for many years), Arnold Bennett, Lionel Johnson, E. K. (now Sir E. K.) Chambers, P. Anderson Graham, who died only recently after his long editorship of *Country Life*, Clarence Rook, that gay and sweet Horatian of the 'nineties whom to know was to love, and many more, and the wonderful Meynell family in whose home, or by whose care, Francis Thompson was rescued sufficiently from opium and poverty to become a great poet. But I met Thompson only when he was ceasing to write poetry. With his *New Poems*, he had taken farewell of poetry and begun to look on

life as so much dead lift, so much needless postscript to his finished epistle. We gave Francis as many books of theology, history, biography, and, of course, poetry as he cared to review. It was a usual thing, in reading the proofs, for one of us to exclaim aloud on his splendid handling of a subject demanding the best literary knowledge and insight.

#### OFFICE TALK

Thompson came frequently to the office to receive books for review, and to bring in his 'copy.' Every visit meant a talk, which was never curtailed by himself. This singer, who had soared to themes too dazzling for all but the rarest minds—this poet of the broken wind and the renounced lyre, had not become moody or taciturn. At his best he was a fluent talker, who talked straight from his knowledge and convictions, yet never for victory. He weighed his words, and would not hurt a controversial fly. On great subjects he was slow or silent; on trifles he became laughably tedious. This dreamer seemed to be surprised into a kind of exhilaration at finding himself in contact with small realities. And then the fountains of memory would be broken up, or some quaint corner of his *amour propre* would be touched. He would explain nine times what was clear, and talk about snuff or indigestion or the posting of a letter until the room swam round us.

#### A GENTLEMAN SHABBY

A stranger figure than Thompson's was not to be seen in London. Gentle in looks, half-wild in externals, his face worn by pain and the fierce reactions of laudanum, his hair and straggling beard neglected, he had yet a distinction and an aloofness of bearing that marked him in the crowd; and when he opened his lips he spoke as a gentleman and a scholar. A cleaner mind, a more naïvely courteous manner, were not to be found. It was impossible and unnecessary to think always

of the tragic side of life. He still had to live and work in his fashion, and his entries and exits became our most cheerful institution. His great brown cape, which he would wear on the hottest days, his disastrous hat, and his dozen neglects and make-shifts were only the insignia of our 'Francis' and of the ripest literary talent on the paper. No money (and in his later years Thompson suffered more from the possession of money than from the lack of it) could keep him in a decent suit of clothes for long. Yet he was never 'seedy.' From a newness too dazzling to last, and seldom achieved at that, he passed at once into a picturesque nondescript garb that was all his own and made him resemble some weird pedlar or packman in an etching by Ostade. This impression of him was helped by the strange object—his fish-basket, we called it—which he wore slung round his shoulders by a strap. It had occurred to him that such a basket would be a convenient receptacle for the books which he took away for review, and he added this touch to an outward appearance which already detached him from millions. He had ceased to make demands on life. He ear-marked nothing for his own. As a reviewer enjoying the run of the office, he never pounced on a book; he waited, and he accepted. Interested still in life, he was no longer eager for it. He was free from both apathy and desire. Unembittered, he kept his sweetness and sanity, his dewy laughter, and his fluttering gratitude. In such a man outward ruin could never be pitiable or ridiculous, and, indeed, he never bowed his noble head but in adoration. I think the secret of his calm was this: that he had cast up his accounts with God and man, and thereafter stood in the mud of earth with a heart wrapt in such fire as touched Isaiah's lips.

EVERARD MEYNELL'S 'LIFE'

These memories are evoked and, indeed, greatly assisted by the fifth and revised edition, just published, of the late

Mr. Everard Meynell's *Life of Francis Thompson* (Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 6s. net), to which, it is explained, he devoted the last weeks of his life before his death at Genoa in December 1925. It is a fine biography, fine in its pith, penetration, and candour. On page 197 is quoted a letter so characteristic of our own 'Francis' that I have read it with sad amusement. It is as follows:

DEAR HIND,—I muddled up the time altogether to-day. How, I do not now understand. I started off soon after 2. Thinking I had time for a letter to the *Academy* which it had been in my mind to write, I delayed my journey to write it. When I was drawing to a conclusion, I heard the clock strike 3 (as it seemed to me). I thought I should soon be finished, so went on to the end. A few minutes later, as it appeared, the clock struck again, and I counted 6. Alarmed, I rushed off—vexed that I should get in by half-past 4 instead of half-past 3, as I intended—and finished the thing in the train. I got to the *Academy*, and was struck all of a heap. There was nobody there, and it was ten past six! How I did it, I do not even now understand. I will be with you in good time to-morrow. But that cannot make amends to myself for such a *fiasco* and waste of time.—Yours,

F. T.

I have been wondering whether, by any chance, this was the occasion on which I obtained my most *detached* view of Francis Thompson. I had left the *Academy* office somewhere about six, and was on the north side of Holborn, near the First Avenue Hotel, when, across the street, I saw Francis marching towards the Lane I had just left. Something withheld me from running across to greet him. I think I was fascinated by his extraordinary appearance. In one of his earliest pages Mr. Everard Meynell writes of Thompson's 'unrecognising progress in the street.' Unrecognising he passed, and by me only recognised. His 'fish-basket' was at his back and the pipe in his mouth sent back a long stream of



smoke. It was as though the south side of Holborn had disappeared and I was looking out to sea at a lone rusty tramp-steamer going on its way, secretive of all its inner life.

#### AN ATTIC NIGHT

In another page Mr. Meynell suggests what I hardly think can be true—though it may be true—that I was one of the very few, perhaps the only, friend of Thompson's with whom he had been known to dine in a restaurant. That was at the old Vienna Café at the corner of New Oxford Street and Hart Street, Bloomsbury. I have told of this before, and I shall probably tell of it again. I had asked him to a meal, and he came with me. We sat down in that upper room under whose mirror ceiling Germans, Austrians, Poles, Russians, and other less decipherable foreigners played chess and draughts at certain hours. You remember how in the one conversation which Boswell felt himself powerless to report, Dr. Johnson 'ran over the grand scale of human knowledge.' Thus it was that night. Thompson called up the masters of poetry, and their mighty lines. I shall never forget his repeating this, from *Comus*, as one of the things in all English verse that he relished:

Not that Nepenthe which the wife of Thone  
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena.

These words fell on my ear like the music of all poetry, and I turned to see Thompson's eyes humid with understanding. He always dealt in great names and antiquities. The arts, the rites, the mysteries, and the sciences of eld gave him their secrets and their secret words. But I think he loved the pomp of facts only that he might transmute it into the pomp of dreams, and where his dreams ended let his poetry tell. On this occasion he told me with that bold prescience which had been Milton's before him that his poetry would live. But he had said this:

The sleep-flower sways in the wheat its head,  
Heavy with dreams, as that with bread;  
The goodly grain and the sun-flushed sleeper  
The reaper reaps, and Time the reaper.

I hang 'mid men my needless head,  
And my fruit is dreams, as theirs is bread;  
The goodly men and the sun-sleeper hazed  
Time shall reap, but after the reaper  
The world shall glean of me, the sleeper!

When Francis Thompson wrote these verses, he did not indulge a fitful or exalted hope; he expressed the quiet faith of his post-poetic years. Thompson knew that above the grey London tumult, in which he fared so ill, he had hung a golden bell.

#### THOMPSON'S FAITH

There is a thing about Francis Thompson that I should like to say, even at great hazard. I should not describe him as having been, in the ordinary sense of the term, a 'devout' Roman Catholic. He was a sincere one within himself. He had studied for the priesthood at Ushaw, but even at the age of nineteen his absent-mindedness was such that his guides and teachers were fain to advise him to relinquish all idea of that great vocation. He did so, to his grief, but to the gain of literature and, through literature, of the Church itself. The truth is that Thompson was better fitted, by far, to make glorious verse concerning the Mysteries than to be their ordained servant and minister. Like the swimmer who saw Italy from a wave, it was his to see Heaven from the swell of a vast emotion.

## THE TOSH HORSE

BY REBECCA WEST

From the *New Statesman*, Sept. 16th, 1922

*Rebecca West is the wittiest woman of her generation, very entertaining, very positive, devastating in her judgments, never failing in understanding, generous in friendship.*

IN the course of a poem by John Davidson called *A Ballad of Hell* the damned souls are represented as 'amazed to find that they could cheer.' Something of their amazement, at the jerky fulfilling of a neglected function, I feel to-day. I am amazed to find that I can blush. My sensations, interesting as they are in themselves, I shall probably deal with elsewhere under the title of 'A Forgotten Sport'; my point now is their surprising origin. For they are caused by a volume named *Charles Rex*, by a writer named Miss Ethel M. Dell, who has received every sort of acclamation save only the morning stars singing together; and I doubt if one worries about the lack of super-terrestrial recognition when one can sell nearly half-a-million copies of a single novel. It is, moreover, a volume that I was predisposed to regard with affection, because of this paragraph in its first page :

'Saltash turned and surveyed the skyline over the yacht's sail with obvious discontent on his ugly face. His eyes were odd, one black, one gray, giving a curiously unstable appearance to a countenance which otherwise might have claimed to possess some strength. His brows were black and deeply marked. He had a trick of moving them in conjunction with his thoughts, so that his face was seldom in absolute repose. It was said that there was a strain of royal blood in Saltash, and in the days before he

had succeeded to the title, when he was merely Charles Burchester, he had borne the nickname of "the merry monarch." Certain wild deeds in a youth that had not been beyond reproach had seemed to warrant this, but of later years a friend has bestowed a more gracious title upon him, and to all who could claim intimacy with him he had become "Charles Rex." The name fitted him like a garment. A certain arrogance, a certain royalty of bearing, both utterly unconscious and wholly unfeigned, characterised him. Whatever he did—and his actions were often far from praiseworthy—this careless distinction of mien always marked him. He received an almost involuntary respect wherever he went.'

It is pleasant to say that Charles Rex keeps up his form to the end. He habitually said 'egad' and used 'terrible foreign oaths' and broke into French, though that concussion rarely extends to anything more than the word *mais*; he 'dismissed the waiter with a jerk of his eyebrows'; and when dining at home said to the butler, 'I'm going to smoke on the ramparts,' where his acres lay below him . . . took the cigar from his mouth and spoke ironically, grimly, 'There is your kingdom, Charles Rex!' he said. And in every line that is written about him one hears the thudding, thundering hooves of a certain steed at full gallop; of the true Tosh-horse. For even as one cannot walk on one's own trudging, diligent feet if one desires to attain to the height of poetry, but must mount Pegasus, so one cannot reach the goal of best selling by earnest pedestrianism, but must ride thither on the Tosh-horse. No one can write a best-seller by taking thought. The slightest touch of insincerity blurs its appeal. The writer who keeps his tongue in his cheek, who knows that he is writing for fools and that, therefore, he had better write like a fool, may make a respectable living out of serials and novelettes; but he will never make the vast, the blaring, half-a-million success. That comes of blended sincerity and vitality. It is true that in the past a very great success could be attained by

writers who had not this latter qualification. It could not be maintained that either Annie S. Swan or Joseph Hocking had more vitality than a horse-drawn tramcar; but they caught a public nearly extinct nowadays, but enormously numerous all over England at the time they began to write, which had not yet cast off the Puritan restrictions imposed by the Nonconformist wave of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This public wanted to read fiction, but felt uneasy in doing so unless it had an appearance of religious and moral propaganda.

But the rest of the best-sellers have, like the toad, a jewel in the head: this jewel of demoniac vitality. Marie Corelli had a mind like any milliner's apprentice; but she was something much more than a milliner's apprentice. When one turns over her pages one comes on delicious sentences—such as the description of the bad man who made a reputation as a wit by dint of stealing a few salacious witticisms from Molière and Baudelaire—which make one see that here was someone who was sure, in rather a different sense from Stevenson's, that since the world is so full of a number of things we ought all to be as happy as kings. Her incurably commonplace mind was incapable of inaccurately surveying life, but some wild lust for beauty in her made her take a wild inventory of the world's contents and try to do what it could with them. What a gallant try this Molière-Baudelaire sentence is to do something with some hearsay story of vice wearing at times an iridescence, and of French authors writing wicked books! She rode the Tosh-horse at full gallop; and so, too, did Sir Hall Caine. Nothing in the history of literature is more pathetic than the career of this man who, thrown in his youth into the society of the Pre-Raphaelites, realised that they had brought into being a lovely and exciting world of the imagination, and for the rest of his life tried to bring such a world into being himself by writing immense novels about illegitimate half-

brothers called by the same Christian name, who, owing to an exact resemblance, serve each other's sentences in Portland, while all the female characters become nuns. The best-sellers of a later day are milder, less interesting stuff; but theirs, too, is that same source of power. It was impossible to meet Charles Garvice without realising that here was a dynamic good man; and his abundant eupeptic benevolence forced itself through to the printed word and gave a real warmth to the scenes where the kindly earl, anxious to make his son's mill-girl bride feel at home, took the entree dish from the butler and helped her with his own hand. Heaven knows how in the tepid pages of *The Rosary* its million readers detected the power that lived in Mrs. Florence Barclay, that made her physically radiant as a young girl when she was a woman of sixty and permitted her to enjoy complete confidence that she was directly inspired by the Holy Ghost; but it must have leaked through by some channel. (In trying to understand the appeal of best-sellers, it is well to remember that whistles can be made sounding certain notes which are clearly audible to dogs and other of the lower animals, though man is incapable of hearing them.) Even Mr. A. S. M. Hutchinson, grey and unexuberant as his pages may seem, has this same secret. Throughout *This Freedom* he keeps up the same high level of innocence and idiocy; at the end, as at the beginning, he leans o'er the gold bar of Heaven and the straws in his hair are seven. But of this modern company Miss Dell is a queen. She rides the Tosh-horse hell-for-leather. Positively at the most thrilling moments (of which I prefer the moment when the new Lady Saltash, exceptionally light on her feet owing to early training as a circus-rider, springs out upon the ledge of the family ramparts because she wearies of the way that Lord Saltash has neglected to consummate their marriage, and only steps back when he explains that he has pursued this policy because of spiritual awakening caused by a remark the

poor girl had thoughtlessly made to the effect that he had made her believe in God) one feels as if one might be ridden down.

But I blush, and wonder. This is the story of a middle-aged voluptuary who, when he is cruising about the Mediterranean, comes on an Italian hotel proprietor beating a page-boy, and interrupts the sport. That night he finds the boy concealed as a stowaway on the yacht, and immediately realises—though he keeps silence—that here is a girl in disguise. For five chapters the story titillates us (us includes, one amazingly estimates, the mass of the population of Surbiton, Bournemouth, and Cheltenham) with a description of the peculiar intercourse that takes place between them in these circumstances. There is a specially pleasing incident when they are playing cards and the girl-boy cheats, and Lord Saltash beats her with a riding-switch. We afterwards learn that she had cheated on purpose that she might have this delicious revelation of the gentleman's quality. There is a collision at sea; the girl's disguise necessarily comes to an end. Lord Saltash sends her to a woman friend to be educated for polite society. Thereafter the story becomes a record of the interest felt by various persons in the question of whether this girl is or is not a virgin. Her fiancé comes to the conclusion that she is not, owing to the fact that a visitor recognises her as having been a page-boy at the Italian hotel, and precipitately casts her off; although a life of immorality which involves posing as a page-boy in an Italian hotel must have been something so rich and strange that few of us could forbear to pause and inquire. She then marries Lord Saltash, and a great play is made with the fact that the marriage is not consummated. The book ends with the approach to the consummation. These figures are dummies; but they are very completely finished dummies.

God forbid that any book should be banned. The practice is as indefensible as infanticide. But one begins to remember

what books have been banned during the last few years. Mr. D. H. Lawrence's sincere, and not for one second disgusting, *The Rainbow*; Mr. Neil Lyons's beautifully felt *Cottage Pie*; *Brute Gods*, that astringent product of Mr. Louis Wilkinson's unique talent. How true it is that there are those who may not look at a horse over a hedge; and there are those who may lead it out through the gate. There are now at least two sights which must fill the heart of any serious English writer with wistfulness. One is when he looks back over the gulf of time and sees Anatole France being entertained by the Royal Literary Society and utilising the opportunity to kiss Sir Edmund Gosse. For he may be fairly certain that had he written the *Histoire Comique* and the *Mannequin d'Osier* and *L'Anneau d'Améthyste* he would not have had the opportunity to kiss Sir Edmund Gosse. Far from it. Rather would he have the opportunity to try to see the good side of the Lord Mayor of London or some stipendiary magistrate with simple and stupid views of public morality and the decency imposed upon the printed word. The other sight is when he gazes across the esplanade of any watering-place and looks at the old ladies reading their Ethel Dells. Truly we are a strange nation.





## LEADING ARTICLES



## THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

*From The Times*

THE ceremony on the 11th inst. was the most beautiful, the most touching, and the most impressive that in all its long, eventful story this island has ever seen. It uttered in its sublime simplicity the very heart of the whole people. Stately and solemn it was in form, with all the restrained and chastened splendour by which Church and State pay their last outward homage to the glorious dead, but the high thoughts and the deep emotions which these outward symbols strive to express were overpowered by the supreme feeling that here was one of ourselves, one of the people, one of the hundreds of thousands of all sorts and of all conditions, who had laid down his life for us. That was the feeling uppermost in the minds of the vast multitude who watched the Unknown Warrior as he passed to his last home amid the reverend and prayerful silence of his fellow-subjects, and as he was laid to rest among the greatest of our race. Pity for this plain man who had done his full duty, more than once filled the eyes of the onlookers with tears—an outbreak of emotion very rare with English crowds. But in every feature and in every detail this wonderful rite was so conceived and so executed as to move the deepest and the noblest of the sentiments common to us all. From the most refined to the least instructed the appeal went home to all, and it is hard to say which it most profoundly stirred. The King was the chief mourner; the pall-bearers were the most famous of our captains by sea and land and air; a hundred V.C.'s furnished the guard of honour—such a guard as no monarch ever had. When the coffin was rested before the Cenotaph and to the roll of the drums—the

drums whose every beat recalls the terrors and the gallantry of war—and the notes of the brass, the choir raised the great hymn our people know and love, 'O God, our Help in ages past,' many of those present were too deeply moved to join. The Archbishop began the Lord's Prayer, which the King and all his subjects present repeated with uncovered heads. Then came the two minutes' silence, and in sharp contrast the ringing notes of the 'Last Post.' The King laid a wreath before the Cenotaph, and the procession moved on to the Abbey. The service within those hallowed walls bore the same character as the military ceremonial without. The glorious words of the Burial Service are always understood of the people and always loved by them. They were sung to the noblest music and spoken over the Unknown Warrior, but not over him only. Those who heard them felt that they were uttered also for all the hundreds of thousands, his comrades in death as in life, who rest in far-off graves from Flanders to Mesopotamia, or who sleep their last sleep beneath our guardian seas. Among the congregation prayed many of the bereaved. To them, above all others, the rite must have been trying and consoling. They saw their dearest honoured as no man has been honoured before, in the person of the unknown man who lay before them wrapped in that wonderful flag, 'the Padre's Union Jack,' the flag whose history is for ever interwoven with the deepest tragedies of the war. That emblem now covers the Unknown Warrior's grave in the Abbey; surely it should never leave those doubly venerable walls. On it lay another wreath from the King, with a brief but fitting inscription in memory of all who died unknown in the war. The coffin was lowered; the last words were said; Mr. Kipling's *Recessional*, that great prayer of mingled thanksgiving, warning, and supplication, was sung; again there came the wonderful music of the drums, and the congregation felt that the greatest service of their lives was done.

'Lest we forget.' The words are ever seasonable, but at this moment they have a very special application. 'To-day we honour the dead, let us not forget the living,' Field-Marshal Lord Haig wrote. He justly insists that our duty to the living is a part of what we owe to their dead comrades. One part of this debt we have now paid in symbols; we have still to complete payment of the other part in deeds. A quarter of a million of the comrades of the Unknown Warrior are still seeking employment. Many of them have been crippled in the cause for which he gave his life. These men are not begging; they are asking for means to earn a living. They are asking that the sacrifices they have made for their country shall not be their ruin. They are asking that promises lavished when their services were needed for our defence shall be made good now that these services are needed no longer. So long as any single ex-Service man, able to work and willing to work, remains unemployed, the nation's debt of honour to its defenders will not be justly paid.

## THEN AND NOW

BY J. A. SPENDER

From the *Westminster Gazette*

*I. A. Spender will always be remembered as the editor of the Westminster Gazette, the death of which was one of the tragedies of English journalism. His paper, the organ of old-time responsible Liberalism, was Mr. Spender himself—scholarly, sympathetic, experienced in men and affairs. He was his own leader-writer, and whatever else might be said of his paper, it never lacked good taste. Nowadays, Mr. Spender writes for the News Chronicle, and his judgment is of immense use to that newspaper. In my experience most journalists who have arrived at positions of authority are generous in their help to men who have still to make their way, but no man more than J. A. Spender.*

THE malaise about the state of Europe which has led to Viscount Cecil's withdrawal from the Government is widely shared, but difficult to define in precise terms. Broadly speaking, it may be stated in the form of a question. Is Europe going back to the old road which led to the Great War or is it faithful to the vows which it registered in the Covenant of the League of Nations? Accordingly as we answer this question we may be comparatively at our ease, or the reverse, about the questions of machinery which agitate some people—whether the League should be invoked at one stage or another, whether the Locarno Pact impairs the authority of the League, and so forth. If the general tendency is right, all these questions will answer themselves and the League in the end will be secure in its position as the co-ordinator of all peaceful efforts. But if the general tendency is wrong, nothing in the

end could save the League, which in that case would either go down or be captured by a group in competition with another group, as in the old days before the war.

The choice is now, as always, between two ideas of security: security by arms and alliances, or security by conciliation and mutual agreement. Locarno and the accession of Germany to the League seemed to have committed the Great Powers definitely to the latter choice, and all peacefully-minded people rejoiced accordingly. But in the last few months there have been signs of wavering in that choice. The English-speaking peoples have set a disastrous example by their failure to agree about naval armaments, which, though it may be of intrinsically small importance between themselves, has greatly undermined the authority of both in preaching peace and disarmament to their neighbours. The French have shown a reluctance to carry out the reduction in the Army of Occupation which was supposed to be an implied part of the Locarno Pact, and, what is even more important, they have used arguments which suggest that they do not accept the Locarno idea of security, that they are still looking to a grip on the Rhine frontier as their means of securing themselves against Germany, and may even seek reasons for continuing it after the Treaty date for its expiry has run out. In the meantime our own statesmen appear to be drifting back to the old device of patching-up and announcing 'complete agreements' signifying nothing, which was the curse of diplomacy in the three years after the war. There is no clear voice to say that the French notion of obtaining security by the occupation of German territory is in open conflict with the Locarno Pact and must be fatal to it, if persisted in.

Appeals to history are generally thought useless, yet on this matter the lesson of history is so clear and recent that not to remember it seems a gratuitous folly. The pre-war system of Europe followed remorselessly upon Bismarck's belief that



the isolation and weakening, which in the end became the persecution, of France was the only way of security for Germany; and if the French now entertain a similar belief about Germany, the sequel will be the same with the parts reversed. It took nearly twenty years from the Treaty of Frankfort to bring into existence the Franco-Russian counter-alliance, which was to divide Europe into two camps and finally to be the ruin of German policy, and it may take as long from the Treaty of Versailles to produce a similar result in this generation, but the end is certain, if the same road is followed. Before he left office Bismarck himself had discovered that the other great nations could not be subdued to the one aim of keeping them grouped round Germany for the isolation of France, and no one but he could have performed the feats of jugglery and chicanery which had kept them in a formal unity for so long. His Three-Emperors League, his secret and special Alliance with Austria, his Triple Alliance, his Reinsurance Treaty with Russia, were in their several ways masterpieces of cunning and audacity, and if security could have been obtained in these ways Germany should have been impregnable. But behind them all was the idea—contrary to nature and humanity—of keeping a great nation cowed; weak and isolated for the benefit of its neighbour, and that in the end brought the inevitable nemesis. Other nations rallied round the intended victim, and some of them began to ask what would happen to them if Germany were left unchecked.

The French are a humane people with the gift of imagination, and we hope still they will perceive that their security lies in not doing to Germany what Germany did to them in the twenty years following the Franco-German war. But now, as then, the politics of Europe are fluidly in the making, and it seems to us the part of friendship to let it be known that this country holds by Locarno and shares none of the views which have recently been aired in Paris newspapers.

## WHY IS THY SPIRIT SO SAD?

BY IAN COLVIN

From the *Morning Post*, Oct. 17th, 1929

*By common consent, Ian Colvin is the most brilliant of contemporary leader-writers, and his pen has for years given distinction to the columns of the Morning Post. He is a die-hard Tory, as are his colleagues, with a fine taste in letters, an incisive prose style, and a gift for writing verse which is often poetry. The following leader is very characteristic of Mr. Colvin's power of effective hard hitting.*

WE are anxious to understand—and if possible to redress—the injury of which Lord Rothermere so bitterly complains in a letter to-day. He gave an interview, as we shall presently show, to the Hungarian newspaper *Az Est*, which created a storm in Hungary and was reproduced in the German Press. Our Berlin Correspondent, in his account of the affair, took it for granted that Lord Rothermere had been in Budapest, whereas the interview took place in Scotland. Mahomet did not go to the mountain: the mountain—that is to say the London Correspondent of *Az Est*—went to Mahomet—if Lord Rothermere will permit the comparison. Here, then, is what may be called a geographical error, which we corrected as soon as we heard of it, but of which, for the life of us, we cannot see the importance. It is, in our humble judgment, not where Lord Rothermere spoke, but what he said that matters. Admitting freely, then, that Lord Rothermere was at Dornoch when we said he was at Budapest, let us ask him—Does he admit or does he repudiate the interview? If he admits the interview, is not our error merely geographical? If he repudiates the interview, why does he not address his complaint to

*Az Est*? In either case, why is he so angry with the *Morning Post*? Have we unwittingly placed in peril his hopes of the iron crown?

No, there we should again be in error: Lord Rothermere, as he informs us, is not a candidate for the throne of Hungary. His advice to that country is upon much more democratic lines. We have already said that he does not, in plain terms, repudiate the interview, and in the first of his letters to us he admits at least the views there attributed to him:

I have suggested, he said, that I believe it is in the highest interest of Hungary to put the Government of the country in such a posture as would secure for it the sympathy and help of the great democratic countries of Great Britain, France, and Germany.

If we refer to the *Az Est* interview, we find such a parallel passage as this, for example:

England is ruled by a Socialist Government, which is very popular in the country and has an ever-gaining authority in international affairs. Assisted especially by Germany—also a Socialist State . . . I studied the problems of Hungary, and I think that the way to the revision can only lead through the principles represented by MacDonald, Henderson, Briand, Stresemann.

Thus Lord Rothermere, in the *Morning Post*, so nearly expresses the views attributed to Lord Rothermere in *Az Est*, as to prove, out of his own mouth, the authenticity of the interview. What, then, has he advised Hungary to do? Why, to follow the example of this country, and elect a Socialist Government. He is reported even to have said that 'Hungary must find her new Kossuth'; but we do not gather that he intends a forcible conversion. It is to be done by a change in the electoral system. 'The present Hungarian system,' he is reported to have said, merely 'tries to appear to be democratic.' He does not actually advocate the 'flapper' vote for

Hungary, but does suggest that Hungary must 'keep pace with the spirit of the age.' Lord Rothermere, in short, having helped to defeat Conservatism in this country, seems anxious to see Socialism established in every other.

All this accounts for the annoyance of Count Bethlen; but how are we to explain the anger of Lord Rothermere? This much at least is clear; that his anger is not with *As Est*, but with the *Morning Post*. Have we offended by showing that while he opposes Socialism at home, he supports it abroad? Or is there a more personal reason? The great newspaper magnate appears to be unable to forgive us for continuing to exist. That there should be an independent newspaper still alive in England seems to him intolerable. We are reminded of King Ahab in the matter of Naboth's vineyard:

And Ahab came into his house (which was upon Mount Carmel) heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

'It must,' he says, 'be galling to run an unsuccessful newspaper year in year out.' Probably; we do not know; but to run it for 160 years continuously would be so incredible a feat that Lord Rothermere must see that his hypothesis is untenable. Between the circulation of the Northcliffe Press and the circulation of the *Morning Post* there is no ground of comparison. A cigar merchant is not galled when he hears that someone else has sold more of Woodbines in a year than he has sold of Corona Coronas in a lifetime.

## ENGLAND FIRST

BY GUY POLLOCK

From the *Morning Post*, May 4th, 1926

*Guy Pollock is a member of a most distinguished family. He is the son of Walter Herries Pollock and a kinsman of Sir Frederick Pollock, the Bishop of Norwich, the Master of the Rolls, and a number of other equally accomplished persons. Before the war he and I were colleagues for years on the staff of the Daily Express. He remained with the Express for some years after the war, and has now for some time been the managing editor of the Morning Post. Pollock is a die-hard with a sense of humour.*

AFTER the hot fit, the cold; even in the midst of a great insanity, the return of some essential common sense. As we write, the catastrophe—it could be no less—that threatens all abates a trifle of its menace, so that the industrial and political state of our land is not past hoping. That being so, however slender the hope, we would not add fuel to a fire not yet alight, or make more hard, by any word or phrase, the path to honourable peace and tolerable settlement. To speak our mind, to tell the truth as we see it is an obligation in which we shall not by any means fall short. To hold language at so grave an hour that might inflame a baser passion would be disservice to the cause of England.

There are facts in a situation concerning every man, woman, and child in these islands, and in all this Empire, which must be considered narrowly and honestly by every person capable of thought. During the week-end courses have been followed which, if they be not stayed, lead directly to a ruin, greater or less, partial or complete, in which all

must be involved. The failure of miners and mine-owners to negotiate a settlement on the lines of the Commission's report was itself a tragic folly. It seemed inconceivable to the community. But every approach to settlement was barred by the considered refusal of the miners' leaders to accept that basis of negotiation which was revealed in the report. 'Not a penny off, not a minute on.' That *ad captandum* and unfortunate slogan prevented all the hopes of peace and brought to naught all the patience and goodwill of the Prime Minister, all the efforts of the Trades Union Congress to further a settlement. Worse remained behind. The Trades Union Congress, armed at last by the consent of Trade Unionists themselves with arbitrary powers to dispose of the free will and the livelihood of each and all Trade Unionists, decided on Saturday to throw in everyone and everything, every penny and every person, in support of the miners' refusal to recede from a position economically impossible. This was a gambler's throw. It was, in our opinion, both a folly and a crime. We do not seek to impugn the bemused motives which dictated it, or to arraign as traitors the Trade Union leaders who made this tragical decision. If we believed that Trade Unionists were the enemies of their country, and all Trade Union leaders the firebrands of revolution, it would be time to despair of our State. We believe no such thing. We are convinced that the great majority of Trade Unionists are sane and patriotic, English to the core. We are convinced that a majority of their leaders mean no ill to the State of which we all are members. To admit the highest possible motives and to believe that the decision to call a general strike was taken in the hope of helping the miners to wage successfully an industrial fight can make no difference to our judgment.

For what was the effect of that decision? What are the possible consequences of a general strike? The decision exchanged an industrial dispute for a political *coup d'état*. It

was an attempt to undermine the authority of the Government and to substitute for parliamentary control and a democratic conduct of national affairs in the interests of the nation as a whole the domination of a section of the populace. The community numbers 46,000,000; Trade Unionists number 4,000,000. There are even 10,000,000 manual workers outside the Trade Unions. Yet, by a general strike in vital trades, the four million seek to dictate to the other forty-two million and, by bringing the civilised life of the community to an end, to compel that settlement of the miners' dispute which reason denied and economic facts prevented. A general strike is and must be a challenge to ordered government. Once made it must be resisted like any other invasion, alien or internal, on the life of the community. It demands one of two answers—abdication or resistance. No government dare abdicate; no free and courageous community can fail to resist.

So much for the effect of the decision. What of its possible consequences? A general strike must either succeed or fail. If it were to succeed the reins of government would in actual fact have passed from Downing Street to Ecclestone Square, and the Constitution under which we live would be in ruins. That could not happen until what began as a general cessation of labour under Trade Union control had passed through the stages of hunger, riot, and mob violence to the actuality of civil war, until the forces of order had been defeated bloodily by the forces of disorder. No such result is possible in our land, where free men lead free lives. There remains the alternative of failure. We are convinced that a general strike would fail as it has always failed in highly civilised communities. But before it failed, whether it lasted four days or four weeks, it would have stifled at birth the just perceptible revival of our trade, mortgaged all our resources for years to come, and humiliated England over all the envious world. When its failure was acknowledged we should, every one of us, be

deprived of resources, great or small, which we now enjoy and we should return to our labours, if the very basis of our labours had not been overturned, without hope of prosperity or prospect of ease. The miners would still be at issue with the owners, while the various industries on which their unreasoning allies depend for the means whereby they live would be unable to supply those means. The general strike means in failure a partial but widespread ruin; in success a warfare more horrible, more loathsome, more catastrophic than any which any one of us has known.

Thus we deem the decision to call a general strike both folly and crime, just as we deem the attitude of the miners a blind, a futile, and a tragic error. We have faith, however, whatever winds may shake it, in the virtues of our race. We rely still on those virtues which are not confined to class or creed, to one or another section of political thought. They are virtues inherent in the breed of Englishmen. They brought us through the worst perils of our history. They will prevent the worst consequences of a folly which must be understood even while it is condemned. They may, under God, still achieve the triumph of reason and bring an honourable settlement to the mines before a fatal step is taken and a fateful issue joined.

Yet God helps those who help themselves. We who make the State must serve and save the State. The Prime Minister has shown that great example which points the way for all. He has striven for peace to the last ounce of energy. He has refused to compromise his duty. So we do all the same, then by the grace of God we shall not be ashamed.

‘Each for defeat; or all for England?—Choose.’



*This leading article appeared in the Daily Mail on May 3rd, 1926, and was the immediate cause of the General Strike.*

## FOR KING AND COUNTRY

*From the Daily Mail*

### THE CAUSE OF THE GENERAL STRIKE

THE miners, after weeks of negotiation, have declined the proposals made to them, and the coal mines of Britain are idle.

The Council of the Trades Union Congress, which represents all the other trade unions, has determined to support the miners by going to the extreme of ordering a general strike.

This determination alters the whole position. The coal industry, which might have been reorganised with good will on both sides, seeing that some 'give and take' is plainly needed to restore it to prosperity, has now become the subject of a great political struggle which the nation has no choice but to face with the utmost coolness and the utmost firmness.

We do not wish to say anything hard about the miners themselves. As to their leaders, all we need say at this moment is that some of them are (and have openly declared themselves) under the influence of people who mean no good to this country.

A general strike is not an industrial dispute. It is a revolutionary movement intended to inflict suffering upon the great mass of innocent persons in the community and thereby to put forcible restraint upon the Government.

It is a movement which can only succeed by destroying the Government and subverting the rights and liberties of the people. This being the case it cannot be tolerated by any

civilised Government, and it must be dealt with by every resource at the disposal of the community.

We call upon all law-abiding men and women to hold themselves at the service of King and country.

#### WHAT IS THE QUARREL ABOUT?

The duty of the nation is to rally round its constitutional and lawful authorities and to support them at this grave moment with all possible zeal and energy. But it is necessary that the public generally should know what is the exact issue on which negotiations between the Government and the miners have broken down.

If the miners themselves are right, the question is one of the meaning of the word 'initiated.' In their letter on Friday night they said of themselves:

'they are not prepared to accept a reduction in wages as a preliminary to the reorganisation of the industry, but they reiterate that they will be prepared to give full consideration to all the difficulties connected with the industry when the schemes for such reorganisation shall have been initiated by the Government.'

The Cabinet replied that 'the word initiated in the miners' reply is ambiguous.'

The word initiate, according to the *Oxford Dictionary*, means 'begin, commence, enter upon, introduce, set going, give rise to, originate, start (a course of action or practice).' The dispute then appears to be whether the miners are to be asked to consent to a reduction in wages before the reorganisation is initiated or begun, or whether the reorganisation is to be initiated or begun before the miners are asked to consent to a reduction in wages.

If this is the difficulty which parts the Government from the miners, it might be removed by the Government sending the miners a communication on these lines:

'We give you our assurance that the reorganisation scheme shall be initiated from May 3, and we will appoint persons to carry it out without delay. On receipt of this assurance from us we trust that you will inform us that you are prepared to comply with the recommendations of the commission concerning wages. We will, of course, give the assistance which we have already promised towards carrying out the commission's scheme.'

Supposing that nothing more than this point divides the Government and the miners, it is not one on which the country should be subjected to all the trials of a general strike.

#### A FREE PRESS

There is a prospect, if a general strike takes place, that the publication of the newspapers will be suppressed by order of the trade unions. The strike order issued on Saturday by the Trades Union Congress directs that 'the printing trades, including the Press' shall be held up 'as and when required by the General Council.'

There have been some indications that this order may be used as a means of putting pressure on newspapers, and requiring them to satisfy the strike leaders with regard to what matter they publish or omit in return for permission to appear.

We hope that no British newspaper will assent to any such conditions.

Newspapers which are not free are much better unpublished.

THE ELEVENTH DAY, HOUR, AND  
MONTH

BY JAMES DOUGLAS

From *The Star*, Nov. 11th, 1918

*James Douglas was for many years the editor of The Star. He joined Lord Beaverbrook to become editor of the Sunday Express, the point of affinity between the two men being that they both have Ulster Presbyterian blood in their veins.*

... Green Earth forgets.  
The gay young generations mask her grief;  
Where bled her children hangs the loaded sheaf.  
Forgetful is green Earth. The gods alone  
Remember everlastingly: they strike  
Remorselessly and ever like for like:  
By their great memories the gods are known.

—MEREDITH.

THE Armistice is signed and the war is over. Peace reigns beside Liberty. This is the peak, the apex, the summit of human history. All that follows and succeeds is anti-climax.

The Great Man, Mankind, will never behold an hour more supreme, a moment more supernal. The soul of mortal reality is now naked and bare to the vision of the awed and humbled spectator. We are in the presence of things far too high for joy and far too deep for tears.

Purged by pity and by dread, by triumphing grief and conquering sorrow, our instinct moves us to pray for reverence and for obeisance in the very article of victory.

Unholy is the voice of loud thanksgiving over slaughtered men, and our natural exultation is chastened by the grieving thought of aching hearts and wounded spirits in every war-worn land. We are encompassed in our devout jubilation by a

cloud of heroic witnesses, the gay and gallant dead who are living in their country's breast.

When the young men are taken from the city and from the hamlet the spring goes out of the year.

In these dim November days of bated thanksgiving and muted rejoicing, our hot, salt tears fall upon the lonely graves of the young men who have given their lives for their country. There is a supreme sanctity in the soldier's supreme sacrifice, and we would gather all the young soldiers into the arms of our compassion and the embrace of our ruth.

Not unto us, but unto the noble army of the heroic dead be the praise, the glory, and the laurels of the divine liberty that purifies the earth, the sea, and the air. Greater love knoweth no man than the love of the soldier who lays down his life for the unborn generations of mankind.

And in this epic of freedom let all the unaging martyrs mingle in a serene and sacred comradeship of devotion and duty.

In the holy kingdom of liberty there is no place for stale rancour or stagnant revenge in the presence of the young knights and paladins who proudly sleep in the calm amnesty of death.

The generations to be will never know the anguish and the agony of our generation. They will never feel the sorrow of the innumerable mothers and fathers who have died the death with the flesh of their flesh, the bone of their bone, the heart of their heart, the soul of their soul. Theirs will be the harvest of our grief, the reaping of our sorrow.

Our November will be their April, our autumn will be their spring. For us the fall of the leaves will always be a symbol of glorious youth marching like a bridegroom to the nuptials of death, to the bridal of the grave.

Gladly one by one they laid down their stainless lives year after year from the red dawns of 1914 to the red sunsets of

1918. Not grudgingly or of necessity did the young men lay their treasure of youth on the shrine of Liberty.

They were not too curious in their nobility of honour. They were not too fastidious in their heroism of sacrifice.

Royally they shed their blood, not for our sake, but for the sake of the better ages yet to be. It is fitting that we who for a brief hour stand with bared heads by their sacred graves should prostrate ourselves in lowly gratitude and trembling love.

The world is not worthy of their simplicity.

As we witness the overthrow of haughty cruelty and callous arrogance, the abasement of throned evil and sceptred sin, the crashing downfall of tyrants and tyrannies, the humiliation of the froward, the punishment of the crowned criminal, the judgment of the mighty, let us search our hearts and pray for the purification that transcends triumph and outsoars victory.

The liberty won by the selfless agony of the living dead is not ours to squander in petty selfishness. It is a trust for us and for all men and for all time. Upon us has descended an unparalleled and unmatched miracle. We are the legatees of Heaven, the executors of Providence. Something not ourselves has made for righteousness.

This is not a secular, but a spiritual victory. The two Marnes and the two Ypres were pale triumphs wrested from sombre defeat, not by mortal but by immortal thews.

In dust and in ashes let us confess that we were led out of disaster by ways that we knew not, and that the pure secret of our undeserved and unearned salvation is eternally locked in the cold young hearts that beat no more with ours, and everlastingly hidden in the young eyes that see no more the earthly sun.

In our grateful humility let us clasp hands as brothers, resolved that in the days to be we shall labour together for the sure garnering of the great harvest of liberty and peace in all the sorrow-stricken lands.

## PEACE WITH DRAGON'S TEETH

BY J. L. GARVIN

From *The Observer*, May 11th, 1919

*Mr. Garvin, twenty-four years ago, found The Observer in a low state. As editor, writer and managing director, he has raised it to a position of great strength and influence, and made it famous and quoted throughout the world. Its characteristic independence was never more boldly shown than in its struggle against the excesses of the Treaty of Versailles. Mr. Garvin lisped in journalism. He first became widely known early in life as a writer on foreign, imperial, and economic affairs in the Fortnightly and other reviews, and the Daily Telegraph. He has edited the Encyclopaedia Britannica.*

IF ever there was a time for the whole plainness of the truth, though nine out of every ten denied it, that time is now. We intend to express that truth without mitigation. Our forecast a week ago of the paper-peace was right to the letter. A distinguished neutral, staunchly friendly to our own country, calls it with keen wit Peace with a Vengeance. Yet at the same time it is peace with folly. Instead of a settlement with security, it is a patchwork hinting peril in every seam. These terms give no fundamental solution to any European problem. They raise more dangers than they lay. They revolve in the vicious circle of the old diplomacy. They repeat the fatal precedents which have always led back to war and made the end of one struggle the direct cause of another. In the twentieth century, with all its democratic movements and portents, despite all the lessons of Armageddon, these terms try to do what Louis the Fourteenth, Frederick, the Napoleons great and less, Bismarck, attempted. The failure of them all has been written on ruined walls in letters of fire.

## I

All the Treaty—apart from the incorporated and saving Covenant of the League—scatters Dragon's teeth across the soil of Europe. They will spring up as armed men unless the mischief is eradicated by other and better labours. All the vaunted realism of the provisions will prove in the long run and probably in the short run as artificial, untenable and futile, as the morals are absent or execrable. For civilisation there is now one hope, and no other. That hope lies in the development of the League of Nations by the more and more united democracies of the world. Apart from that the Treaty fondly designed to operate for fifteen or for thirty years would not stand for five. Within half a decade another, and more representative, more sovereign, Congress will have to meet to reverse much indeed of the work of the Conference now closing.\* There will be quarrels, conspiracies, agitations, assassinations, revolutions, collapses. The motley patchwork which has been stitched together will have to be unpicked almost throughout, thread by thread.

The choice for civilisation will lie between drastic revision on the one hand and disruption and war on the other. The democracies will prefer drastic revision and abatement to that disruption and that war. The English-speaking democracies, above all, never will mobilise and fight again for the arrangements which are proposed. If the contrary is imagined in Paris, then Paris is grievously misled. The people have to be reckoned with, not the statesmen. When passions are cooled, when ill-consequences are evident, when alternatives are clear, the peoples will think and act very differently from the statesmen of to-day. The victorious democracies have had their quarrel just. They will determine to make their peace real and sane.

\* *This unfortunately has not happened, but the conferences on financial revision and disarmament go on without end.*—J. L. G.



Never in this world will they travail and bleed, never will they sacrifice their sons and give their toil, for the maintenance of a wrong, and for the assertion of a lie.

This journal upholds now what it preached from the outbreak of Armageddon and through four years of bitter and rending struggle. When we did our part in kindling effort for the full idealism of the cause we meant it. We urged a new way of life for the world instead of the old way of slaughter. We strove not for the domination of the victors, but for the redemption even of the enemy and the reconciliation of mankind. No lesser motive, none, could have been worth the unparalleled sacrifice, sorrow, the effort and endurance of that vast agony. Now instead of the clean break with the deadly examples of the past, instead of the epoch-making departure from the traditional diplomacy, instead of the best of settlements after the worst of wars, we have a Treaty which in its main features is as devoid of constructive wisdom and even of fundamental common-sense, as of every trace of the Sermon on the Mount. The thing will not prosper. Within a few years either the thing will be changed by universal consent, or worse will befall us all.

## II

‘Now that you have cut you must sew,’ said Catherine de Medici after a memorable crime. There the mental daughter of Machiavelli was more moral in her astuteness than are modern statesmen in their virtue. We had hoped that her maxim would shine upon the ruling figures of the Paris Conference as in letters of gold. But the statesmen in these momentous deliberations have been more bent to continue the cutting than to do the sewing. So in article after article they have bequeathed to the world not an unprecedented increase in the common stock of goodwill, but new legacies of divisions, ascendancies, subjections, dismemberments—

new motives for hatred and revenge. As we look back now on the six months since the armistice, as we think of the larger opportunities which were opened, and on the way in which they have all been missed, we could wish many things.

President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George and their staffs share together this honour—that in however weak and halting a fashion, in spite of other views and the endless difficulties of their negotiations and their atmosphere, they have devised the League of Nations, which offers a good chance of redeeming all. But we wish that President Wilson had either been less rigid in his principle or firmer in his action. We wish that the Prime Minister had been less fettered by his election pledges so as to be truer to the real Mr. Lloyd George, whose moderating and reconciling powers, when he chooses to exert them, are the best of his gifts. We wish that an almost octogenarian veteran like M. Clemenceau, splendid as he has been in the struggle, had been less chained in the ideas of the past, and had been able to take a better account of the ideas and forces of the future. We wish that Signor Orlando and Baron Sonnino had been animated either by the idealism of Mazzini or by the prudence of Cavour. As it is, instead of the strongest and broadest foundations for lasting peace, we have provisions and arrangements which will make it about as difficult as possible for peace in Europe to endure.

If a multitude of words could secure mankind that vexed species now would be safe indeed. The summary of the proposed peace was ten thousand words. The full text of the preliminaries, we are told, means a million words. For aught we know, the Final Treaty a year hence or so, incorporating all the subsidiary instruments and stipulations, will run to twenty million words. Never were such unimaginable quantities of words employed with a view to signing, sealing, and delivering engagements which sooner or later will prove utterly untenable in their substance.

## III

We were supposed to fight against militarism and to intend devising constructive and reconciling substitutes for it. The world now suggested to us is to be based on militarism and on nothing else for a long term of years. Marshal Foch and other soldiers regret that there is not to be more militarism. The Treaty is vitiated from end to end by mixing up right and inevitable justice with provisions applying mere Prussian principles in an anti-German sense. Thus you have a whole which depends entirely on the logic of force. Yet the actual force which alone could sustain it never will be available for the period contemplated. There is the conspicuous vice of this nominal settlement. It piles inordinate weight upon a floor which in any case—having in view the whole democratic tendency of our time—would be liable to collapse of itself. After the first £1,000,000,000 required from Germany, nothing in connection with the future of the indemnities will be sure. But vaguely the vanquished race is expected to keep working for others decade after decade. That is flatly against human nature, which in these matters has an odd habit of coming to its own despite all obstacles. Tribute running for years to more thousands of millions will be a permanent incitement to unrest, protest, conspiracy, to international agitation and intrigue.

The generation responsible for the war will pass away gradually, leaving much of the burthen on Germans now so young as to be practically as innocent of the original crime as babes unborn. How can the financial enslavement of the German race be maintained for thirty years except by a combined militarism with that of France in the forefront? How can all Germany left of the Rhine—a region amongst the dearest to the whole race—be held down under French domination for fifteen years, except by sheer militarism? How

can the semi-annexed German population taken over, with the coal in the Saar Valley, be managed and mastered in these circumstances except by force?

All this must either be altered by a revisory Congress very differently constituted—and that before many years are out we are certain to see—or general disarmament must be quite indefinitely postponed. In that case, the Powers who have been obsessed by the thought of wringing super-indemnities from Germany will bring not only endless trouble and perplexities, but needless burthens and dangers on themselves. There is another question, and a searching one. Every conceivable stimulus is given by these arrangements to the fraternising spread of international Socialism, if not to subversive Bolshevism. The Big Four, under the influence of the short-sighted forces which will suffer most by gaining so much of their own desires, have done about the worst for the future of nationalism and capitalism alike, but about the best for the movements working against both. Idle is it to play the ostrich in that regard.

#### IV

But we must make a brief summary of remaining evils. The vendetta of a thousand years between Gaul and Teuton is not closed, but inflamed by measures calculated to arouse in Germany a more vehement hate than existed in France after 1871. East and West Prussia are split asunder. We do not say it was easy to avoid. But if it had to be done, economic and other concessions should have made it bearable. The thing as actually done opens another hopeless vendetta between the Germans and the Poles. Sooner or later the Germans—in concert with the Russians—will have their chance if Polish policy continues to pursue its present lines. It is rousing all the old anti-Polish enmities, alienating every neighbour and potent forces within—Germans, Lithuanians, White Russians,

Ruthenians, Czechs, and Jews. This carries us a little beyond the text of the preliminary Treaty, but is an inseparable part of all the considerations.

We may add that none of the new States yet possesses a firm framework or a solid internal organisation, or adequate communications without and within, nor credit. The Allies have shown no sign of providing steady economic help—and promoting economic combination by groups such as is absolutely essential to establish the New States. Every one of them has a new feud with two or three or more of its neighbours. Russia under any regime will never accept a western boundary drawn everywhere, almost from the Arctic to the Black Sea, without regard to any Russian views of Russian interests. Magyars and Bulgars only wait their time. Yet another new feud is that of the German-Austrians against Italy, which has pushed into the fringes of the Tyrolese—German Highlanders who in these matters are about as tough and stubborn a race as any known. Insistence upon the Treaty of London-plus-Fiume would mean as between Italy and Yugo-Slavia another irreconcilable vendetta. Between these neighbours, whose mutual friendship and consideration might have been invaluable to each other, no compromise even is now possible without breeding bad blood. Without being able for years to organise a new war on her own initiative, Germany, amidst troubles on every side, will have plenty of chances to fish in troubled waters.

To these realities very little difference will be made whether the German delegates at Paris are authorised to sign or not. If they sign it will be as France signed in 1871. There would then be temporary submission to force, but in heart and conscience no acceptance. The whole of Germany is stupefied and overwhelmed by the terms. The beaten people knows at last what in the past they have so mercilessly taught to others—the meaning of total defeat. But except when

Poland was vivisected or when Napoleon slashed and trampled Prussia after Jena, no modern nation has ever been so extremely and pitilessly dealt with as the German race is treated to-day, though masses of that race had no true individual responsibility from beginning to end for the war or its methods, but were helpless in the hands of their late rulers and doomed from their birth to the automata of the Hohenzollern State-system, educational, military, and commercial.

## V

If the Germans are wise they will sign, of course. But if they signed and sealed twenty times over, they, like any other race in their place, would determine to seize every such opportunity of mitigation or repudiation as the inevitable troubles and dissensions of the rest of the world are quite certain to provide. The root-vice of the whole treaty is that it leaves the German race no real hope except in revenge—no matter how long the revenge may have to be deferred. It offers the hundred millions of the beaten races in Central Europe, including Magyars and Bulgars, no good inducement whatever to become willing members of a new peace-system. This latter aim was the essential principle of real confidence and stability; but in the whole Treaty there is no glimmering perception of the constructive necessities of Europe as a whole.

If we are now asked what the Germans will do, we shall not find it very difficult to answer. They will go back to the lessons which made them great after Jena, but they will bring those lessons up to date. They would have been deeply divided had the Treaty been less harsh. They will be compacted by its severity. Universal and abiding antagonism to it will give them a fresh basis of common interest. After passing, no doubt, through confusion and convulsions, they will be solidified and fortified by adversity. It must be remembered that magnanimity of the victors, considered even on the

lowest ground, pays, because it divides the conquered; whereas these are only united by a prolonged weight of punishment to which they are all subject. Compelled like no other race to face realities, the Germans will derive from the situation into which they are thrust a new moral and practical strength which would not otherwise have belonged to them. Hence the foolishness of what the Allies are doing. It is necessity that makes men strong, success that usually blinds them.

If the Germans cannot build warships, more of their energy, as a matter of course, will go into building merchant ships and commercial aircraft. If they maintain no arsenals and armaments, then more of their energy will go into manufacture. If conscription is suppressed, then there will be added to the forces of productive labour about 600,000 males who would not otherwise be available in any given year. If their fighting power is annihilated they can develop, as after Jena, gymnastic and athletic exercises throughout the country. Nothing can prevent that. Their great institutions for education, science, and technique will remain. The terrible lesson of Armageddon is the facility with which armaments and armies can be improvised in emergency by any race with a highly scientific and manufacturing equipment. The vanquished will use every means to link up reciprocally with Russia—in politics, commerce, aesthetics. The stupendous thing this Treaty does is to remove absolutely every cause of rivalry between the German and Russian races, and to give them instead a number of common interests, especially as against several of the New States lying between them.

## VI

Having no colonial outlets overseas, Germany is directed and compelled, as a result of the Treaty, to concentrate on commercial penetration by land towards east and south-east; and, above all, on political and commercial service to Russia.

That is not all. More than ever yet, Germany will be the focus of international Socialism affecting the mind and policy of labour in all countries, and not least in France. And Germany will be constrained by her interests to take the lead in developing and strengthening the League of Nations, and in invoking all its powers of revision. The demand for revision will be urged by some 300,000,000 of people altogether, with our late enemy at their head, for that demand will be supported on different accounts by Russians, Magyars, Bulgars, Jugoslavs, and others, as well as by all Germans. Napoleon said that one ought to build a golden bridge for a flying enemy. The maxim applies to the politics of settlement after war no less than to battles and campaigns. That is what modern France in the last few months has not remembered.

As we have said before, these are vistas of inflammable matter and mountains of combustible stuff. We will try to put the truth in a sentence. This Treaty tends to Balkanise—if we may coin the word—three-fourths of Europe. We repeat our conviction that under the democratic conditions of the twentieth century the thing will not stand. We firmly believe that peace when gravely threatened again, as must happen, will be preserved by the indignant will of civilised mankind. But preserving the peace will mean not the maintenance of this Treaty as it is drawn, but the discarding of a large part of it, the reversal of some of it, and the decisive modification of the whole. For years we shall all be thinking, talking, and writing about it. We hope to pass next week, for our part, from negative criticism to constructive. We shall try to show not only that every hope depends on the League, but how every hope may be saved by it.

What we have had to establish here finally is our point of view, declared at the beginning of the war, maintained throughout the war, and faithfully continued now that the time has come for upholding in peace the principles and ideals



by which the Associated Nations one and all professed to be inspired during the struggle. The best amongst us did not fight and work only to end by the adoption of German principles now repudiated by millions of the Germans themselves. We fought and worked, let us repeat it, not for the mere domination of the victors nor for the selfish security of a few, but for the redemption even of the enemy and for the reconciliation of mankind. That alone is worthy of the pure hearts of our young dead who fought without hate. That alone is the truth, and it will prevail.

## AN ACT OF FAITH

BY SISLEY HUDDLESTON

From the *New Statesman*, Sept. 12th, 1928.

*Sisley Huddleston lives in Paris—or rather, nowadays, near Paris, for he has got to the country-house stage of his profession—and he looks more like a Frenchman than any Frenchman whom I ever knew. He has been Paris correspondent of The Times and, nowadays, writes for the Christian Science Monitor and a dozen other papers. He is a man of vast industry and reliable judgment, and has contrived to obtain a really sound knowledge of French politics, an accomplishment shared by few Englishmen and not by very many Frenchmen.*

PARIS, August 27.

My invitation to the ceremony in the Salle de l'Horloge this afternoon lies before me as I write, but I think I shall ask my young assistant to squeeze himself into the overcrowded room and be thrilled at the spectacle of elderly gentlemen signing the Treaty for the Renunciation of War. One becomes *blasé* about these uncomfortable occasions. They are designed for our juniors and for eager society ladies. Doubtless there

will be present very much the same crowd as attended the last really good murder trial. They are delighted at the prospect of being eye-witnesses, and even the great public of many nations is vicariously gloating over the pen and the inkstand which are employed by the diplomatists.

But I am by no means *blasé* about the Pact itself. I think it possesses a genuine importance. I also think that, as a document, it is utterly worthless. Rarely have both sides in a controversy been so right as those who belittle the Pact and those who magnify the Pact. The Pact means nothing, and it means much. Should we be sceptical? Yes and no. We should be poor diplomatic students if we were not somewhat cynically amused at the loopholes which have been left in the text or which have been created by interpretative and explanatory statements. Anybody can go to war for anything at any time, and reconcile his behaviour by reference to the correspondence that has accompanied the recent negotiations. Yet I do not think that, in fact, anybody will go to war before turning round upon himself as many times as a dog which seeks a suitable sleeping place.

No diplomatist wished to sign this Pact. It is, in my somewhat lengthy experience, the Unwanted Pact *par excellence*. M. Briand threw out his suggestion nearly eighteen months ago in a thoughtless moment as a harmless and inconsequential oratorical flourish. When it was taken up seriously in the United States, the French Foreign Office was greatly troubled, and raised every possible argument against the translation of a peroration into a treaty. I have good reason to know that Mr. Kellogg for six months resisted the pressure that was put upon him to begin negotiations. Sir Austen Chamberlain and the British Foreign Office were at first suspicious. Signor Mussolini was contemptuous. Even Herr Stresemann, with special reasons for subscribing to any pacific declaration, only accepted the Pact because it was put forward by the United

States. Nevertheless the statesmen are sincere, and, in some cases—notably in the case of M. Briand and of Mr. Kellogg—enthusiastic advocates of the Pact.

Therein lies its essential virtue. The force of public opinion convinced the diplomatists that this Pact was necessary. The force of public opinion will hereafter convince them that it must be observed in its spirit and not in its letter. The joint authors of the Pact have become truly popular, and the names of Kellogg and Briand may be remembered gratefully by posterity. We are living this week in Paris in an atmosphere of peace; and reservations, qualifications, exceptions, and the rest, do not exist. It is not altogether easy to keep a calm judgment in this atmosphere, but I will try to set out the main considerations for and against the Pact.

From the narrow diplomatic standpoint we may say that nothing is changed. We may properly admit the axiom that vague phrases are without significance. But as observers who believe in the imponderables, who believe in democracy, who believe in human progress, we shall be right in asserting that the signing of the Pact is a remarkable moral event. There are two ways of looking at the proceedings at the Quai d'Orsay. One way is diplomatic, the other way is moral.

Here is an act of faith. Here is a solemn announcement that war is ruled out. If in one year or in ten years this or that nation were to break the pledge, the public would be amazed. It would resent the deception. It would, presumably, rise against those who attempt to rely on subtle diplomatic phraseology. It disregards the annexes. It sees only the broad effect of the Pact. The reservations are, so far as the public is concerned, uttered *sotto voce*. They are not heard. They will be ignored. Governments are no longer free. They have, in raising public expectations, tied their own hands. If they have logically contrived a possible exit from the Pact, they will, at the first sign of a movement to escape, be driven back by an

indignant public into the safe precincts of the Pact. For that matter, I believe the Governments will be voluntary prisoners. There is probably no Power which is willing again to run the risk of war. The reservations are merely the expression of the old traditional diplomacy which has been trained to conduct affairs with circumspection; it is a ghostly diplomacy which does not realise that it is dead and that its methods are futile.

In a journal such as this it is, however, permissible, is indeed obligatory, to be perfectly frank. Let me therefore say what can be said about the defects of the Pact. The old Round-heads trusted in God, but they kept their powder dry. The old diplomatists may trust in the Pact, but they are not going to relinquish, if they can help it, their doctrines, their alliances, and their weapons. The Pact must not be understood to interfere with the Monroe Doctrine. It must not touch the vital interests of Great Britain in special areas. It must not prohibit defensive wars—and all wars can be regarded as defensive. If it is broken by one nation it falls to the ground; and, precisely at the moment when there is genuine need of it, it becomes non-existent. Further, it does not abrogate existing arrangements such as the arrangements of Locarno, such as the arrangements of the League, such as the arrangements of the network of treaties, all of which conceivably imply war; and though it is pretended that there is no incompatibility between these arrangements and the Pact, everybody knows that they are in contradiction with the professed purpose of the Pact. No matter. If it comes to a clash, public opinion may well insist on the triumph of the Pact.

When we regard the actual military and diplomatic happenings, as distinct from the theoretical arguments, we shall see that there is much which can scarcely be squared with the acceptance of the Pact. One or two instances will suffice. Recently the British authorities organised a mock air raid on

London. They imagined the possibility of an attack by an aerial force which, in present circumstances, could only be that of the country with whom England enjoys the friendliest relations. The test was watched with interest in France. I do not think it had any significance. Nor was it supposed in France to have any significance. There is, on the part of the authorities, a curious lack of a sense of humour. It would be giving them too much credit to accuse them of irony in fixing the date of a sham air fight so near to the date of the signing of the Peace Pact. I am irresistibly reminded of M. Herriot's visit to London in 1924. He came to usher in a new era of peace. It was thought proper to provide some innocent entertainment for him; and accordingly he was taken down to Spithead, to gaze upon the most formidable naval demonstrations that had been held since the war!

Again, the present moment is comically chosen for British co-operation in the French military manœuvres in Rhineland—where, if the Pact has validity, there should be no foreign troops, French or British. Then Sir Austen Chamberlain, forgetting America, blandly announces that there is some kind of naval understanding between France and England—an understanding reached without consultations with the United States, and, rightly or wrongly, in the absence of specific information, interpreted in the United States as a Franco-British naval coalition. These things, however, are simply stupid. They indicate the survival of Mrs. Malaprop, who hides herself somewhere in the mysterious recesses of Government departments.

A satirical commentary in an American newspaper published in Paris may be quoted in this connection:

A Pact is to be signed in Paris solemnly renouncing war as an instrument of national policy, except against China, Russia, Spain, the three Republics of the West Indies, the seven Central American Republics, the ten

countries in South America, and a district known as 'certain regions of the globe.' This leaves a reasonable latitude.

The remark is not quite fair, but it is fair enough as a warning that the Governments must now put their policy into consonance with their professions. The act of faith must not be made to look foolish. Already the occupation of Rhineland, after the signing of the Locarno Pact, looked both foolish and offensive. If it is continued after the signing of the Peace Pact, it will look still more foolish and offensive. The acid test of the Peace Pact will come quickly, and those who, clinging to diplomatic precautions, make it appear vain, will incur a terrible responsibility which may—as I hope—arouse public wrath. Things cannot be left as they are. Either the Pact will soon be exposed as a hollow farce, or it will be shown as a reality.

In France particular attention was given to a remark of the *Osservatore Romano*. It was in an article which semi-officially gave the views of the Vatican.

'Nobody can deny,' said the Roman writer, 'that the war has completely failed to achieve its pretended ideals, and that the peace, born of blood, is not a just and durable peace, but a peace which possesses the spirit of the war which engendered it. That is why political efforts, noble in themselves, are bankrupt. That is why pacts, such as that of Mr. Kellogg, are depreciated before they are signed.'

In other words, one can only build on solid foundations. If the foundations of Europe are to-day rotten, no structure of peace built upon them will endure. The upheaval will come and the edifice will topple. Perhaps some of these feverish attempts to build the palace of peace are inspired by an uneasy feeling of the menace. The proper course was surely to put the foundations right first. It may be that we have set to work

in the wrong order. It may be that we should have repaired and consolidated the substructure before we began to build with the idle hope of placing a weight on Europe to maintain the *status quo*.

It is now too late to begin again. But it is possible, if we are wise, even after the erection of the building, to repair and consolidate the foundations. If we will do that, then the palace of peace will stand. If we will not, then it will be always in danger of collapse. At this hour of jubilation, these are truths which seem to me worth enunciating—nay, which must be enunciated if the act of faith is to be rendered foursquare and impregnable against all the assaults of perilous circumstance which will certainly beat upon it.

## WHEN THE WOUNDED GO HOME

BY SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON NICOLL

From the *British Weekly*

*Sir William Robertson Nicoll, Presbyterian minister and man of letters, came from Scotland to play his part in making Hodder & Stoughton the great publishing firm it is, and to found the British Weekly. He was the greatest religious journalist of his time, with a considerable knowledge of politics and a great faculty for obtaining invaluable peeps behind the scenes. He was one of Mr. Lloyd George's confidants, and was once rather unkindly described as the 'most successful Christian in history.'*

WE are thinking not so much of the wounded who are recovering from their wounds, who are being tended with the utmost love and skill, who have been honourably dismissed from the fight, or are being strengthened, for its renewal. They have gone home, or they will go home, to sun themselves in the warmth of devotion. But what of those who

have died of their wounds, who lie cold and stark on the battlefield, who, it may be, have been buried in nameless graves known only to God? Have not they, too, gone home—home to a love compared with which ours was untender—to a care compared with which ours was ungentle?

Surely Easter and its messages are precious in these days as they have never been before. Never were there so many of our people bereaved or about to be bereaved. What anguished hearts need is the Easter assurance of life. For we cannot, try as we may, love the dead as dead. We may, and we do, love their memories; but if we love themselves, then they are living. Love is for life; it cannot dwell with death.

Easter comes to us with the assurance that the dead are alive, that death has been abolished, that life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel. We are not left to the foiled searching of mortality. The mighty God, even the Lord, has spoken, and we know the truth about death. We have more than words, for the Eternal Word Himself came to us amid the assaults of death, in this night of fears and tears, and bowed His head and gave up the ghost, and slept in the new tomb, and rose from it to smite the gates of brass and to break the bars of iron asunder. This is the Easter tidings. Death is dead for the faithful. The conquest has been achieved that can never be undone. Henceforth the life beyond death is the true life of us, and in a sense we live it now, for death comes to us as sleep, as the entrance into the blessed and everlasting rest. Easter is much more than an unguent to the sorrows of life. It is a way to victory over them. It is much more than an alleviation of human misery. It sheds upon our sorrows a transfiguring strength.

# I

But it may be said, What you have written is true of the faithful dead. But all who have fallen in battle have not been



faithful. How are we to meet this difficulty? It must be faced frankly with all the light we have, and in full recognition of the fact that our light is limited.

We will not make too much of the soldier's nobility. It is true that the good soldier calls forth the love of every honest heart. Courage is the root of all virtue, and it will be an evil day when the coward is allowed to escape. Also self-sacrifice is the divinest element in man, the element that brings him nearest to the Christ who is the Bearer of our sorrows and the Fountain of our joy. We love to hear of those who have given themselves to the toughest and the sternest service, who have been ready to bear the very brunt of the fray. The dust and the smoke, and the garments rolled in blood, and the sword all hacked, and dented armour, and the bruised shield, speak of a hero's work. These are good soldiers who, when they are called to advance to the attack, do not wish themselves away, who feel the stern joy which flushes the face in the light of battle, who do not know how to yield, and will not hear of retreating. Such men are the saviours of their country, and indeed no country can live without them. It is our business, when the land is imperilled, to value them as we ought and to help them as we can. It is impiety to throw responsibilities upon God which He has thrown on us. We need in our defence no mere trumpeters of gala days, but men to be looked for among the slain and the surviving when the furious storm of battle is over. We have seen in this war great marvels of self-sacrifice which we cannot behold without bending our heads in reverence.

But it is true that among the bravest there are many who in quiet years did not live wisely, who had many weaknesses, and bore many stains, and were often grievously at fault. Their redemption cannot come from the fact that they died well, however well they died.

Are we, then, to give over hoping, to doubt their place in

the great Redemption? No; for we may hope much, and very much, from the very peril and awfulness and solemnity of their end. Their lives were in hazard from the first day of their fighting. Did they not know it? Did they not breathe a prayer to the Saviour? We take the first extract that lies to our hand from a chaplain's report. He says:

'At 8.50 the evening closes with "family worship"—a short Scripture reading and prayer by the chaplain, after which comes two minutes set aside for silent prayer, when each man has his opportunity for offering the confessions and petitions of his own heart. This evening worship is a very striking act. A stiff rule was made at the outset that no man was to wait to prayers unless he wished to wait. They all wait. The room is always crowded, and the reverent hush during those two silent minutes of prayer is witness to the value the men place on the act.'

'They all wait!'

Our Blessed Lord has taught us in the story of the thief who was saved on the very act of expiring what salvation means. Whoever turns his face to Christ believingly, though it be but for an instant before his death, finds eternal life. This is the gospel in its naked majesty. There is nothing to be added. The life may have been utterly ungodly and wicked. It was so in the case of the dying robber. But when the crucified thief turned in his agony to the crucified Christ all his sins were instantly washed away. We can imagine the Redeemer turning His head painfully, with love in His dying eyes, to the poor suppliant, and we know that He said in His own royal way, 'Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.' Whoever, even at the hour of the minute of his death, believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall assuredly be saved.

But are we to say that this was a solitary, or at best an exceptional case? By no means. It may be that most are saved

in this manner. We will quote Mr. Spurgeon. That great Doctor of Grace says:

‘If the thief was an exceptional case—and our Lord does not usually act in such a way—there would have been a hint given of so important a fact. A hedge would have been set about this exception to all rules. Would not the Saviour have whispered quietly to the dying man, “You are the only one I am going to treat in this way.” . . . No, our Lord spoke openly, and those about Him heard what He said. Moreover, the inspired penman has recorded it. If it had been an exceptional case, it would not have been written in the Word of God.’

## II

‘When the wounded go home’—how do they find it then? Among all the tender and wonderful words of Christ there are none more tender and more wonderful than these: ‘I go to prepare a place for you.’ We cannot fully comprehend them. Underneath are the great abysses of the Eternal Love. How should Christ need to prepare a place for His people? Is it not enough that they should join Him where He is, and behold His glory? But if He is with them, is it not enough? With a word He made earth fit for created man, but He does not with a word make heaven fit for the regenerated. He goes to heaven Himself as a loving host to see everything set in order against their coming. These dear lads, struck to the ground, came into a world where a place was prepared for them. Before they entered it many a loving thought had been given to making ready for them. The garments in which they were first arrayed were the handiwork of their mothers.

‘Little caps in secret sewn,  
And hid in many a quiet nook.’

They were received, most of them, with the gladdest and most loving welcome. So when they pass to the other side, to the new country, they are waited for. They are expected. All

the things they need are ready. Their needs are anticipated and supplied, and the home of each differs from the home of every other. Nothing is too good for them. Everything must be the best. Our Lord is engaged in preparing and in interceding. He does not take any of His redeemed till the fruits are all mellow and the flowers are all full blown.

### III

Then they enter into nobler service. In a beautiful little book, *The Gospel of Hope*, by Dr. Walpole, Bishop of Edinburgh, we read of the young soldier fallen in battle. 'I picture him still going forward, only without the limitation and hindrance that the flesh imposes on us here.' He passes immediately into Paradise, and rests from labour, but not from work. Everything is looked at from within. 'Intuition takes the place of sight, faith that of knowledge.' 'Everyone feels at home at once; there is no strangeness, no gradual getting used to things, no wondering whether you will like it, for all those old friends which, though we admired and praised on earth, we constantly found escaping us, are there in full strength.' We must copy the beautiful passage in which Dr. Walpole describes the comforting greeting of the Divine Love to the young soldier whose name has been inscribed on the roll of honour:

'Away from the home thou wentest, not knowing whither thou wentest, and so thou understandest My going forth to succour the world. In the trenches thou hadst no cover for thy head, no rest for thy limbs, and thou learnedst then the weariness of Him Who had not where to lay His head. For days thou hadst short rations and hard fare, and in uncomplaining cheerfulness didst support the courage of the followers; and so didst thou enter into the Fast of the Son of Man. Again and again I saw thee in the night watches, facing the mystery of death and agonising in the conflict that it brought thee,

and there thou didst have thy share in My Gethsemane. And then in obedience to the call that thou knowest meant death thou didst willingly lay down thy life, and so hast learnt the secret of Calvary more surely than a thousand books could have taught thee. All this was My plan for thee, that in a few weeks thou shouldst sum up the whole of life, and entering into the fellowship of My sufferings mightest share the rest that leads to the glory of Resurrection.'

#### IV

For Resurrection is the goal. Paradise is a home of rest and of joyful work. But it is also a preparation for the Resurrection glory. The happy spirit in the consummation is united to the body. The Resurrection of Christ is the guarantee that those united to Him shall rise in the day of His appearing. For their bodies are redeemed as truly as their souls, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy, when this corruptible puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality. Death admits the faithful to a larger and more loving life. But that life is crowned on the Resurrection day of which Easter testifies. Thus has Christ our Redeemer opened wide His hands and poured forth more than gold.

## MONEY

BY LORD RIDDELL

From *John o' London's Weekly*, July 12th, 1930.

*Lord Riddell is a man of a bewildering number of parts and of insatiable curiosity. He always wants to examine the works and to peep behind the scenes. It is only within the last few years that he has been a regular contributor to one or other of the journals which he controls, but he writes easily and clearly and always accurately. He is a good man to work for, critical, but always appreciative and understanding.*

ECONOMIC experts are beating their brains to discover why the general level of prices has dropped on the average ten points in twelve months, why trade all the world over has suddenly become slack, and why most countries have millions unemployed. Some experts ascribe these troubles to over-production, the holding up of commodities, changing habits, a falling population, and a reduced number of wage-earners. Available figures show that while the world's population in 1927 was about 9 per cent. greater than in 1913, the production of foodstuffs was 13 per cent. greater and that of raw material 35 per cent. greater. There is a glut of wheat, cotton, rubber, copper, coffee, tea, tin, potatoes, oil, and coal.

But that is not the whole story. Improved technical efficiency has largely increased the output of finished products from a given quantity of raw material. Further, products of the older trades are being largely supplanted by those of newer industries and changing habits and fashions are diverting expenditure into fresh channels. The world is spending proportionately less than in pre-War days on food, clothing, coal, and fodder, and more on motor-cars, picture palaces,

newspapers, and wireless sets, and replacing cereals by vegetables and fruits. Think for a moment of the enormous changes due to the disappearance of the horse, which has altered the whole basis of agriculture by reducing the demand for coarse grain. On the other hand, the demand for oil is steadily increasing, although it is not keeping pace with the supply. So far as concerns our country, we are faced with new conditions in the cotton trade, our chief manufactured export industry. That is the chief cause of our economic difficulties. Japan, India, and China are now making up cheap Indian cotton and ousting Lancashire in the lower grade cloths. This, of course, affects not only the Lancashire mill-hand, but also the American farmer, who formerly had a monopoly. These perplexing conditions are made more troublesome by the failure of retail prices to fall in sympathy with the heavy drop in wholesale prices, and by a reduction in the number of wage-earners and potential consumers due to intensive mechanisation and rationalisation. Vast transactions on the instalment plan, particularly in U.S.A., have disorganised industry by unduly stimulating production and mortgaging the future. Further increased employment of women has shifted a large proportion of the spending power to a new class with fresh wants. It is also obvious that before long the producer will have to face the problem of smaller populations. In the last twenty years the excess of births over deaths in England has declined from 11.6 to 4.3 per thousand; in Germany from 14 to 6.3 and in Belgium from 8.9 to 4.8. So far as concerns Great Britain emigration is more or less at a standstill for the moment, but notwithstanding a falling birth-rate the population has increased some three millions since 1910. The world will take some time to cope with these awkward problems.

Other experts ascribe our troubles to other causes. They contend that trade has been hampered by deflation, by a

return to the gold standard, and by a shortage of gold due to production failing to keep pace with world requirements. They allege that salvation depends on more money and more credit. It is understood that extremists in this group go so far as to suggest that trade would be revived by employing men on useless jobs merely with the object of circulating paper money and thus creating a demand for commodities.

These inflationist ideas look attractive at first sight. On examination, however, they crumple up into dust and ashes, like other similar schemes. Note, for instance, the disaster of German marks and French francs. Nevertheless, everyone agrees that the proportion which currency and credit bear to the world's transactions is a matter of supreme importance. What economists are looking for is a currency and credit 'tote' to replace present-day rough-and-ready methods. Some experts advocate a managed currency based on price indices. Meanwhile various expedients are being tried with the object of improving the economic conditions of different nations and different trades. Some nations are building tariff walls higher and higher; some trades are trying to fix national and international prices; some governments, pools, and trusts are withholding commodities from the markets in the hope of stabilising prices; some nations are hoarding gold; some countries are prohibiting immigration, although they still have large open spaces. The present position is rather like a group of jugglers in the dark, each trying to keep six balls in the air and at the same time to jog his neighbour's elbow.

It must be admitted that restriction is the maxim of the modern world, and that up to date the results are disappointing. Intensive organisation appears to have overdone itself. Science has increased production, and yet it seems impossible to distribute the products to the best advantage. We may note also that owing to improved communications and to the size and complexity of modern international transactions,



economic conditions in one part of the world are speedily reflected in other parts.

At an opportune moment Mr. Norman Angell has published a book called *The Story of Money* (Cassell, 21s.). It is intended for the layman's edification and is full of useful facts. The author traces the history of money and explains the theories of the different schools of economics. Those interested in this vital subject will do well to study Mr. Angell's work. Our monetary policy closely affects every man, woman, and child, for on it depends our foreign trade, the price of everything we consume, and what we get for our labour. In considering the subject the primary necessity is to understand what money is. This I shall try to explain.

Money is only a symbol and measure of value. Civilised communities cannot carry on their affairs by barter. Therefore they use money. By this means the manifold transactions of mankind are made possible. But the system has its disadvantages. With unfortunate results, we are apt to confuse the symbol with the reality, and to imagine that money is what it represents. Let me make this clearer. If the government of a tiny island with a currency of, say, £500 increase the amount to £1,000, the addition will not alter the volume or nature of the things represented by the currency. Conversely, no change would be effected by reducing the currency to £250. But prices would be changed. In one case they would be doubled and in the other they would be halved. Any such change would, however, affect one way or the other the dealings of the islanders with foreign countries, as price levels for the time being would affect the islanders' costs of production and therefore their exports and imports. In other words, in currency matters the island could not be a self-contained entity if the islanders found it necessary to do business abroad.

We must remember that a gold or silver currency has a value of its own just like any other commodity, with this

difference, that the value of gold or silver is augmented by the demand for the precious metals for currency purposes. If the world were to abandon the use of gold and silver for currency purposes, the value would fall, as these metals would then be used only for manufacturing jewellery, plate, and the like. I have mentioned silver, but the reader must bear in mind that to-day gold is the basis of most national currencies, the use of silver being restricted to lower grades of coinage called 'tokens.' In most countries gold alone is the measure of value. In Great Britain the gold unit is the pound, which consists of a defined quantity of gold. In these days gold does not circulate as it used to do. For economy and convenience most countries accumulate their gold in central banks and issue paper money on the security of their gold reserves. To quote a picturesque phrase, 'The currency is anchored to gold.' In other words, the quantity of currency depends on the quantity of gold. This expedient has still further obscured the fact that money is merely a symbol and measure of value. It is difficult for the man in the street to recognise that a one-pound note represents 123·27 grains of gold, and that the 123·27 grains of gold represents, shall we say, 226 lbs. of wheat.

Currency mysteries are accentuated by the fact that in this country, at any rate, most large payments are made by cheques or bankers' drafts. These transactions assume enormous proportions as compared with the amount of gold held by the Bank of England against our paper money. The Bank holds, say, £160,000,000 in gold, the note issue is, say, £420,000,000. In one week alone the transactions by cheque reach the colossal figure of, say, £1,000,000,000, which does not include cheques paid over bankers' counters. The reader must remember, however, that a cheque or banker's draft is not what is called 'legal tender.' A creditor can insist on being paid in bank or Treasury notes. As we all know, the Bank Rate deter-

mines what interest we pay on loans from our bankers. But few people realize that the Bank Rate is the rate at which the Bank of England is prepared to discount first-class trade bills, and not the rate at which the Bank is prepared to lend money or to receive deposits, although the Bank Rate governs these transactions. In short, the Bank Rate is another piece of financial symbolism. It should here be pointed out that the effect of raising the Bank Rate is to attract gold to London, and that lowering the rate has the contrary effect. Another phase of our financial operations must also be noted. When the Bank of England considers that credit is short it goes into the market and purchases securities, thus placing the other banks in possession of funds. If the Bank thinks that credit is too plentiful, it reverses the operation by selling securities. It must be borne in mind that all the transactions referred to are based on the value of the pound, and the obligation on the part of the Bank of England to give bar gold for bank-notes, the amount of bar gold being calculated on the value of the pound; and also to buy bar gold at a certain price when offered for sale. This is the so-called 'gold standard.'

We must now consider international transactions. Let us return to the affairs of our tiny island with a paper currency backed by gold held by a central bank. The inhabitants buy and sell with their paper currency aided by cheques drawn on their banks. All works smoothly so long as prices are kept stable. In financial transactions uncertainty is disastrous. But our islanders, being anxious to purchase goods from abroad and to export goods to foreign parts, are faced with the problem of paying for their imports and receiving payment for their exports. Except in trifling quantities the foreigners will not take the islanders' paper money and the islanders will not accept foreign paper money. This is due to the fact that paper money has no intrinsic value. It is only paper unless made legal tender by the Government by which it is issued.

Obviously their powers of legislation are limited to their own territories. In order to carry on international trade, our islanders, their customers, and their vendors are forced back to realities. They find that trade between different countries must be conducted by the exchange of realities in the shape of goods, services, and gold which, as explained already, unlike paper, has a market value of its own. To facilitate these transactions, the islanders and their foreign business connections resort to the use of what are called 'bills of exchange.' If Island Merchant A sells goods to Merchant B in a foreign country for £500 and Foreign Merchant C sells goods to Island Merchant D for £500, B gives a bill to A promising to pay the £500 on a certain date. A sells the bill to D, who transfers it to C, who collects it from B. Or it may be that D gives a bill to C, who sells it to B, who transfers it to A, who collects from D. But note, there may be a shortage of bills because the islanders' imports exceed their exports or *vice versa*. In that case the shortage must be made up by the transfer of gold.

We must not, however, run away with the idea that an excess of imports over exports is always unfavourable. For instance, the excess of British imports over exports represents interest on our huge foreign investments, the profits on our foreign sales of goods, and our remuneration for shipping, insurance, and banking services. In this respect the Americans are making a curious experiment. They are doing a great export trade which they wish to increase. They have large sums due to them from foreign countries for war loans and interest on investments. And yet they are imposing tariffs that prevent the entry of goods. Obviously their trade balance must be paid in gold, of which they have more than enough already, or it must be adjusted by lending money to their customers. The necessity in international transactions for dealing with realities in place of symbols is the obstacle to

the collection of reparations. Creditor countries cannot afford to be flooded with payments in kind, as these would upset their own industries. To avoid this a strange expedient has been resorted to. Germany's creditors are lending her money to discharge her obligations to themselves! Of course, she will be paying the interest on the loans, but her creditors are lending her the capital. In connection with reparations efforts are being made by the establishment of an International Bank to arrange reparations, economise gold, and stabilise world prices. The success or failure of this attempt at International Economic Co-operation is in the lap of the gods. It remains to be seen to what extent the affairs of mankind can be 'managed.' It is quite possible that ultimately salvation may be found in allowing realities to manage themselves.

## THEATRE



## GROCK

By A. B. WALKLEY

From *The Times*, Oct. 8th, 1919

*A. B. Walkley was one of the distinguished and fortunate men who have combined the pursuit of letters with employment in the Civil Service. He was one of the assistant secretaries of the Post Office, and retired shortly before his death. Walkley was on the staff with which T. P. O'Connor started The Star. He was the theatre critic, Bernard Shaw was the musical critic, Richard le Gallienne reviewed books, and H. W. Massingham and Sidney Webb (now Lord Passfield) were leader-writers. Afterwards Walkley went to The Times, and for years his dramatic criticisms, many of which have been collected in volume form, were one of the most attractive features of that newspaper. Walkley was Gallic both in mind and in appearance, and there was a quality of acidity in his wit which, joined to a distinguished style and a sanity of judgment, made everything that he wrote worth reading. In his spare time he cultivated apple trees.*

THERE must be a philosophy of clowns. I would rather find it than look up their history, which is 'older than any history that is written in any book,' though the respectable compilers of Encyclopedias (I feel sure without looking) must often have written it in their books. I have, however, been reading Croce's history of *Pulcinella*, because that is history written by a philosopher. It is also a work of formidable erudition, disproving, among other things, the theory of the learned Dieterich that he was a survival from the stage of ancient Rome. No, he seems to have been invented by one Silvio Fiorillo, a Neapolitan actor who flourished 'negli ultimi decenni del Cinquecento e nei primi del Seicento'—in fact,



was a contemporary of an English actor, one William Shakespeare. Pulcinella, you know (transmogrified, and spoiled, for us as Punch), was a sort of clown, and it is interesting to learn that he was invented by an actor all out of his own head. But I for one should be vastly more interested to know who invented Grock. For Grock also is a sort of clown. Yet no; one must distinguish. There are clowns and there is Grock. For Grock happens to be an artist, and the artist is always an individual. After all, as an individual artist, he must have invented himself.

It was a remarkably happy invention. You may see that for yourselves at the Coliseum, generally, though true clown-lovers follow it about all over the map wherever it is to be seen. Victor Hugo (and the theme would not have been unworthy of that lyre) would have described it in a series of antitheses. It is genial and *macabre*, owlishly stupid and Machiavellianly astute, platypode and feather-light, cacophonous and divinely musical. Grock's first act is a practical antithesis. A strange creature with a very high and very bald cranium (you think of what Fitzgerald said of James Spedding's: 'No wonder no hair can grow at such an altitude') and in very baggy breeches waddles in with an enormous port-manteau—which proves to contain a fiddle no larger than your hand. The creature looks more simian than human, but is graciously affable—another Sir Oran Haut-ton, in fact, with fiddle substituted for Sir Oran's flute and French horn.

But Sir Oran was dumb, whereas Grock has a voice which reverberates along the orchestra and seems almost to lift the roof. He uses it to counterfeit the deep notes of an imaginary double bass, which he balances himself on a chair to play, and he uses it to roar with contemptuous surprise at being asked if he can play the piano. But it is good-humoured contempt. Grock is an accommodating monster, and at a mere hint from the violinist waddles off to change into evening

clothes. In them he looks like a grotesque beetle. Then his antics at the piano! His chair being too far from the keyboard he makes great efforts to push the piano nearer. When it is pointed out that it would be easier to move the chair, he beams with delight at the cleverness of the idea and expresses it in a peculiarly bland roar. Then he slides, in apparent absence of mind, all over the piano-case and, on finally deciding to play a tune, does it with his feet. Thereafter he thrusts his feet through the seat of the chair and proceeds to give a performance of extraordinary brilliance on the concertina. . . . But I am in despair, because I see that these tricks, which in action send one into convulsions of laughter, are not ludicrous, are not to be realised at all in narrative. It is the old difficulty of transposing the comic from three dimensions into two—and when the comic becomes the grotesque, and that extreme form of the grotesque which constitutes the clownesque, then the difficulty becomes sheer impossibility.

Why does this queer combination of anthropoid appearance, unearthly noises, physical agility, and musical talent—so flat in description—make one laugh so immoderately in actual presentation? Well, there is, first, the old idea of the par-turient mountains and the ridiculous mouse. Of the many theories of the comic (all, according to Jean Paul Richter, themselves comic) the best known perhaps is the theory of suddenly relaxed strain. Your psychic energies have been strained (say by Grock's huge portmanteau), and are suddenly in excess and let loose by an inadequate sequel (the tiny fiddle). Then there is the old theory of Aristotle, that the comic is ugliness without pain. That will account for your laughter at Grock's grotesque appearance, his baggy breeches, his beetle-like dress clothes, his hideous mouth giving utterance to harmless sentiments. Again, there is the pleasure arising from the discovery that an apparent idiot has wholly unexpected superiorities, acrobatic skill, and virtuosity in

musical execution. But 'not such a fool as he looks' is the class-badge of clowns in general. There is something still unexplained in the attraction of Grock. One can only call it his individuality—his benign, bland outlook on a cosmos of which he seems modestly to possess the secret hidden from ourselves. One comes in the end to the old helpless explanation of any individual artist. Grock pleases because he is Grock.

And now I think one can begin to see why literature (or if you think that too pretentious a word, say letterpress) fails to do justice to clowns. Other comic personages have their verbal jokes, which can be quoted in evidence, but the clown (certainly the clown of the Grock type) is a joke confined to appearance and action. His effects, too, are all of the simplest and broadest—the obvious things (obvious when he has invented them) which are the most difficult of all to translate into prose. You see, I have been driven to depend on general epithets like grotesque, bland, *macabre*, which fit the man too loosely (like ready-made clothes cut to fit innumerable men) to give you his exact measure. My only consolation is that I have failed with the best. Grock, with all his erudition, all his nicety of analysis, has failed to realise Pulcinella for me. And that is where clowns may enjoy a secret, malign pleasure; they proudly confront a universe which delights in them but cannot describe them. A critic may say to an acrobat, for instance: 'I cannot swing on your trapeze, but I can understand you, while you cannot understand me.' But Grock seems to understand everything (he could do no less, with that noble forehead), probably even critics, while they, poor souls, can only struggle helplessly with their inadequate adjectives, and give him up. But if he condescended to criticism, be sure he would not struggle helplessly. He would blandly thrust his feet through the seat of his chair, and then write his criticism with them. And (Grock is a Frenchman) it would be better than Sainte-Beuve.

## THE TECHNIQUE OF RUTH DRAPER

By W. A. DARLINGTON

From the *Daily Telegraph*, June 12th, 1930

*W. A. Darlington is the theatrical critic of the Daily Telegraph, and nothing would better summarise the difference between the old journalism and the new than the comparison between Clement Scott, who was finishing his career as the Telegraph's dramatic critic when I first went to Fleet Street, and Mr. Darlington—Scott exuberant, insistent, with an inexhaustible supply of adjectives and notes of exclamation: Darlington calm, cool, correct, tolerant. Incidentally Darlington has written some capital humorous novels, and a successful play.*

WHEN I first sat down to write this article I had in mind to attempt an analytical study of Miss Draper's art, but on reflection I realised that the essence of art is no more to be accounted for by the critic than the principle of life is to be discovered by the biologist. Neither in art nor in life is the vital spark to be explained by a theory. Its existence must be taken for granted. Not the spark itself, but the form in which it expresses itself, is a proper subject for analysis; and therefore my heading is not 'The Art' but 'The Technique of Ruth Draper.'

It is the measure of Miss Draper's artistic stature, and perhaps the secret of her enormous popularity, that she cannot be classified under any of the ordinary definitions. Is she an actress? I think not. It is incontestably true that she has a superb talent for stage expression, and that she can convey the impression of character with a subtlety and a certainty that put most actresses to shame. But all the same she is not an actress. If some enterprising manager were to offer to cast

her for a part in a play (and if, which is much less likely, she allowed herself to be tempted to accept his offer), her adoring public would undoubtedly troop to see her, expecting a new triumph; and I am confident that what they would see would be comparative failure.

For the art of the actress is interpretative; Miss Draper's is creative. It is true that we do talk of an actress 'creating' a part, but that is a misuse of language. A part is created by its author, and by him alone. Once a part is conceived by the author, all that the greatest actress can do to it is to complete it according to her own ideas. But Miss Draper does actually create her parts. She is first and foremost an author, and only in the second place an interpreter. She is a short-story writer who by the grace of God is able to employ herself as a medium of expression instead of a pen.

Consider such sketches as the one in which she is an English lady showing her garden, or the one in her present programme in which she is another lady of the same type and class opening a bazaar. The thing that enchants us here is not the acting, good as that is, but the power of exact observation and humorous description. These two women, and dozens of others in Miss Draper's gallery, live for us as if they had been hit off in a page of delicate satire written by a master of prose. Only Miss Draper could invent these women—but I am ready to believe that there are plenty of actresses about who could act them just as well as she does.

I find corroboration for my idea that Miss Draper is not essentially an actress in the fact that the nearer she comes to the stuff of drama the less effect she has upon me. Her 'Miner's Wife' sketch has a culminating strong scene in which any emotional actress might revel; and I felt that Miss Draper would be well advised to leave the actress to do so. When she created that particular short story she stepped outside the limits of her technique, which is an instrument too finely

adjusted for such a task. She was using a razor to do the work of a chisel.

Now let us examine that unique and almost miraculous power of hers, to which every critic, both here and in New York, has borne witness, of peopling the stage with imaginary characters. Is that the quality of an author or of an actress? The answer 'Of an actress' seems obvious, but before we give it let us look a little closely into the means by which Miss Draper gets that effect.

In her present programme is a sketch, 'Three Women and Mr. Clifford,' in which Miss Draper appears in three successive scenes as Anthony Clifford's private secretary, his wife, and his mistress. When the sketch is over we are left with the impression that we know Mr. Clifford, whom we have only imagined, as well as we know the three women we have seen. We have accepted Mr. Clifford as a real person; and I maintain that Miss Draper makes him real to us, not by using her actress's power of suggestion to pretend he is there—though that helps, of course—but by her writer's power of description. Throughout the sketch she is telling us, through the mouth first of one woman and then another, what Mr. Clifford is like. He comes to life in our imagination in exactly the same way as a character in a story comes to life. Indeed, our impression of him is all the more vivid because we do not see him, and therefore do not discover, and have to correct, differences between the Mr. Clifford of Miss Draper's imagination and the man of our own.

The whole method of presentation of this sketch is literary rather than dramatic. If you doubt this, try to imagine Miss Draper writing the story of Mr. Clifford and the three women as a play for flesh-and-blood actors. She would have to begin again from the very beginning and approach her characters from an entirely new angle, and whether she or anybody else could make an effective play out of the material I am exceedingly

doubtful. But she could make an excellent short story of the sketch almost as it stands. All that it needs is the insertion of a few descriptive passages, whose place Miss Draper supplies on the stage by a gesture, an intonation, or a shade of expression.

## GOOD AND BAD SUBJECTS FOR PLAYS

By C. E. MONTAGUE

From the *Manchester Guardian*

*For many years C. E. Montague was for the world of journalism the Manchester Guardian. He wrote its important leaders, he wrote its dramatic criticisms, and every word that came from his pen had authority. By no means a young man and in essence a pacifist, he served in the army during the war, and at the end was no more disillusioned than he was at the beginning. A rather remote figure perhaps, but a man who was one of the great figures of the world of newspapers.*

A SUBJECT for drama may be good or bad, either absolutely or relatively, to audiences of a certain date or in certain places. It is bad absolutely if there be something in the necessary conditions of all stage representation which makes that subject hard to present, as the necessary conditions of sculpture make mists and sunsets and complexions hard for a sculptor to express, and as the necessary conditions of painting make it hard for painters to express wide and unbroken expanses of sunned snow.

Again, within each of these categories of unsuitableness for the stage, there are degrees. Perhaps the supreme degree of absolute unfitness is reached by such a theme as the loves of deaf mutes, which preclude dialogue where most is asked of it. A lesser degree of absolute unfitness is seen in plots which consist in flights and pursuits, like the plot of *Quentin Durward*

and the plot of Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, because the stage cannot present a long pursuit directly; it can only give you picked moments of it, or reports of it at second-hand, not the continuous course of the chase, as a novelist can. So, too, of badness relative to a certain audience there are degrees ranging from the unfitness of *Henry VI* to be played before an audience of French Catholics down to the unfitness (noticed by Irving at the Lyceum) of any kind of sombre tragedy to be played before a London middle-class audience during a time of severe depression in the money market. Of course, one must be careful to distinguish the 'absolute' and 'relative' badness in question from 'complete' and 'partial' badness. 'Absolute' badness may be present in quite small measure; 'relative' badness may be present in such abundance as to make a play impossible. In the subject of Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*, a play of genius, with no 'absolute' badness of any kind about it, there was at a certain time and place so much badness, relatively to certain sentiments current in its hearers, that there was a riot in the theatre.

As between one moral quality and another, there is a good instance of difference in degree of aptness to the stage in Sir Arthur Pinero's play, *His House in Order*. Nina in the play is a gallant young volcano, in eruption for an act and a half, until damped out with floods of talk about renunciation and haloes. She is acted by Miss Irene Vanbrugh, the best of English actresses at expressing the kind of salt, sane, wayward honesty of ill-will and generosity that jumps in a semi-calculable way up and down the whole scale of equity and magnanimity, from uncompromisingly Mosaic doctrines of an eye for an eye to super-Christian feats of self-immolation. You may first think that as Nina she does the Old Testament ethics the better of the two; then you may go on to think that the author has done them vastly better, then you reflect that he could hardly have failed to. For the whole spirit of retaliatory justice,



with its set contrasts and its spirit of pat, triumphant repartee, becomes the stuff of drama much more easily than the mild, blond sort of moral beauty that answereth not again. The code of tit-for-tat is a fine spring of vivacity in rapid speech; the turning of the other cheek has grandeur, even epigram—it may be the most silencing of rejoinders, but not of dramatic rejoinders, for there you want nobody permanently silenced; you want not only a conflict of wills but a conflict of talk, for talk is of the essence of drama, and the less a virtue or a vice runs naturally to free and pointed speech, the less fit material is it for the stage.

Among vices, lying is a good one for stage purposes. With its brisk and obvious immediate effects of stuck or puzzled faces, of action at cross purposes, the gravelling of A, the palpable bewilderment of B, the staggering horror or shame of C, it is just the quality to be played with by the one art that attempts mixed visible and audible effects. Ralph Roister-Doister found out, Falstaff cornered after the affair of Gads-hill, Goldsmith's Lofty confronted with the great man of whose friendship he had boasted—these are typically theatrical as opposed to narrative achievements, because their full value depends on their being seen as well as heard. The looks of them are half the sport; it is a fun essentially visual and spectacular, unlike the pleasure of tracing the ravages of the comic malady of Meredith's *Egoist*, a thing of delicate sinuosities and minute internal crepitations, which does not work itself out on the patient's face in such abrupt, grotesque changes as set theatres in a roar. Mr. H. A. Jones, in his *Liars*, follows the best and oldest examples—better still, he tries to play the old game in a new way of his own. The old way was to have all the lying done by one person, to make one character the personification of untruthfulness and keep him lying steadily throughout, confounding many and at last himself confounded. Such is the liar's progress of Dorante in

Corneille's *Le Menteur*, and such the adventures and discomfiture of Young Bookwit in Steele's *Lying Lover*, perhaps the most distinguished liar, of the first order of industry, on the English stage.

We should have fine illustrations of relative unfitness for drama if someone—some German, if no one in England knows enough English plays—would write a book on the widening of the scope of pity on the stage, the change that has knocked one human infirmity after another out of the list of things that are fair game and put them on the list of things that are past a joke. He might start, say, with the case of blindness, and trace the change down from the typical handling of the blind man in the mystery plays, half butt and half buffoon, to the more compassionate treatment of blindness in Shakespeare's Gloucester, and on to its sentimental treatment in Scribe's *Valerie*. Or our student might take insanity first, and show the growth of the playgoing public's compunctiousness since the thirteenth century, when the 'fool' used for 'comic relief' in England and France was often no professional in motley, but a genuine idiot or maniac, valued for the absurdity of his antics and gibberish. Perhaps the Elizabethans, with their humanely conceived Ophelias and Lears, would again supply a middle term in the series that has ended in our own ultra-sensitive and super-sympathetic feeling that insanity is almost too painful for the theatre to touch at all, even with the gentlest hand.

In this stream of tendency, as in other streams, the current does not run equally fast over the whole width of its bed. If we have lost zest for making fun of blindness, we cling pretty tightly, in farce, to the humours of deafness. Surrendering the comic possibilities of lunacy, we cherish those of wooden legs. Least of all have we made way towards giving up one of the most cruel of stock gibes, the gibe at the woman who is in love, or wishes to be loved, but is plain or fading. For the

ugly man who is in love the theatre has come to have some movings of pity. Banville asked our sympathy for Gringoire's efforts to surmount the drawbacks of his appearance, even before M. Rostand wrote, in *Cyrano*, the first full, three-decked tragedy of male love baulked by ill-looks. But to the amorous woman, who is not lucky enough to be beautiful too, the stage's regular attitude is that of the Elizabethan to the baited bear. Sir William Gilbert, in *Patience*, made a kind of frontal attack, with all the horse, foot, and artillery of jocosity, on the lady who grows stout and whose hair grows thin. The chief source of fun in Messrs. Fenn and Price's *Saturday to Monday* is the ingenuity of a sprightly peer who first makes mock proposals of marriage to three ladies not qualified by adequate beauty to obtain the sympathy of us fine chivalrous fellows in the stalls, and then shunts them on to a secondary line, or siding, of delusion by pretending that he was wooing them on behalf of his private secretary. One of them, an elderly widow, is a kind of modern version of Congreve's Lady Wishfort in *The Way of the World*, and the play makes one feel how slow we proud moderns should be to say the usual hard things about the Restoration drama, 'where no love is,' as Thackeray says. For nearly everybody in the theatre clearly enjoys the baiting of these too susceptible ladies, though Messrs. Fenn and Price do it without genius—rather, geometrically, exhausting the mathematical possibilities of fun on somewhat obvious principles.

Our distinction between absolute and relative intractableness is hard to keep up in the case of dramatic material which the changing physical conditions of the stage have affected for better or worse. Here is an illustration. With Ibsen's aid, certain physical changes—chiefly the withdrawal of the whole stage to within the line of the proscenium arch, and perhaps the introduction of electric lighting—have almost banished from the theatre the explanatory soliloquy and the voluble

aside. Thus a new difficulty plagues the modern treatment of some cases of secret villainy and hypocrisy and of furtive impulse—say, the case of a theft of jewels by a social equal and fellow-guest. The plot of *Mrs. Gorrings's Necklace* turns on such a theft, and, in order to give the audience the thief's side of the matter, Hubert Davies had to—or at least did—make his thief soliloquise freely ('O Lord, I repent,' 'I can restore it now, while they're at dinner,' etc.), because the thief could not plausibly talk about it to any one else. And, though this was all very well when Congreve, for similar reasons, threw a large portion of his *Double Dealer* into soliloquy, it chills or disillusions the ears of many modern playgoers, who have been led to feel almost all soliloquy to be unnatural and a break-down of skill in the dramatist. That the unmanageableness of the sly vices without such aids is not complete is proved by Moliere, who does not avail himself of them in order to show us the whole of *Tartuffe*, inside and out. But Moliere's technics approach miracle, and so far as stolen-necklace plots drive a more than ordinarily skilful dramatist into conventions that are obsolete in a modern playhouse, so far may it be argued that stolen-necklace plots have deteriorated as material for drama.

A more sweeping disqualification than any of these is demanded by Mr. Yeats. He would strike off as not fit for drama the stronger emotions of educated and well-bred modern people, because it is not now the fashion for such people to speak out; 'when they are deeply moved they look silently into the fireplace.' Mr. Yeats finds himself repelled, in plays of passion in contemporary life, at finding the hero 'gushing, sentimental, and quite without ideas,' and is inclined to accept it as a necessity that the hero 'cannot be well-bred or self-possessed or intellectual, for if he were he would draw a chair to the fire, and there would be no duologue at the end of the third act.'

For the moment one is struck with terror at seeing ruled out by so good an authority a wide world of topics that seem to some of us choicely good. But there comes relief; for, after all, is not Mr. Yeats only raising, in a new form, the old objection, so often raised, so often answered, against the use of any convention, any departure from naturalism, in dramatic speech. Well-conditioned people do not, perhaps, quite let themselves go as much as they might when emotion shakes them; they make few set speeches; they head off eloquence if they come near it. But then impassivity was nearly always an aristocratic tradition; at any rate, knightly and courtly people never used to speak blank verse, much less rhymed couplets, when deeply moved; least of all did they sing them, like Tristan and Tannhauser. When we feel that a modern hero is gushing and ranting, it may mean that the dramatist or the actor is bungling the transposition from the natural reticence of life to the necessary expressiveness of art, and not that the transposition should not be made. Had the thing been well done, Mr. Yeats might have felt that the modern man's form of breeding and self-possession was being conveyed, and yet that his passion was being conveyed as well. The censure of modern manners as unadapted for drama seems much as if one were to strike romantic legend out of the list of meet subjects for heroic verse, on the ground that boys writing prize poems had vulgarised some such subjects with their own bombast. Still, whatever Mr. Yeats says about the theatre should be weighed more than once, for even if its most obvious meaning be unsound, it may have another worth noting.

A kindred contention is that life has lost fatally much of its excellence as dramatic material, because it is less 'simple' than it was, because it used to consist more in strong action and large, deep-cut passion and its immediate and violent expression. 'Those things,' a character of Mr. Henry James's is made

to say, 'could be put upon the playhouse boards with comparatively little sacrifice of their completeness and their truth. To-day we're so infinitely more reflective and complicated and diffuse that it makes all the difference. What can we do with a character, with an idea, with a feeling, between dinner and the suburban trains? You can give a gross, rough sketch of them, but how little you touch them, how bald you leave them.' We moderns have a kind of self-love that likes to dwell on the tremendous and unprecedented intricacy and subtlety of our moods and sensations with a kind of doating despair of doing justice to them; but one would hope that art has been growing subtler, too. If a critic of cricket considered modern bowling alone, he might have similar raptures of despondency over the possibility of humanity's playing it—its elusiveness, its complications, its rapidity. Then, turning to consider modern batting, he would find that its counter-advance in subtlety and resource has been still greater. A modern woman of passion may perhaps be more reflective, complicated, and diffuse than Shakespeare's Cleopatra; but then the modern woman of passion is played by Sarah Bernhardt or Mrs. Patrick Campbell, and not by a boy.

Besides real and grounded, or weightily argued, unfitness for the stage, there is a kind of vulgar false repute of unfitness that deprives the theatre of many excellent subjects. It is believed on hearsay by many people that plays ought to be about something which has as little as possible to do with themselves, or which is no longer interesting in itself, such as the ravages of unlawful love in strange, dull families, or improbable and unipiquant scandals about Queen Elizabeth, or self-conscious rough heroism of the Bret Harte kind, fussily virile, swaggeringly humble-hearted, dressed up to the nines in homely simplicity. The novelists, or those of them that have the brains, long ago quitted these avenues to tedium; they opened out new ranges of topic, all alive and

some of them violently kicking; they wrote like Peace Societies and Primrose Leagues; they applied the solvents and caustics of art to gambles in wheat; they took the side of the angels, or the other side, in the unlearned affrays that went on at the same time as the first serious discussion of the evolution theory. Perhaps it is one of the reasons why the English stage has gone down and the English novel gone up.

That our plays ought not to take sides in politics or other questions of the day is one of the things that some people daily say, not knowing what they say, nor trying to know. Some plays ought to and others ought not. It depends upon what makes their authors write best, the advocate's heat or the bystander's curiosity. Sir Arthur Pinero probably writes the better the more completely he dismisses from his mind his reputed aversion to trade unions. M. Brioux seems to write his best when he is burning to improve the French judicial system, or to discountenance the employment of wet-nurses by the inhabitants of Paris. There has been, in recent years, at least one quite good anti-Semite play in France, and, though anti-Semitism is quite a bad thing, one does not see why a Jew, with a sound critical temperament, should not derive agreeable aesthetic sensations from the play, while desiring, on other grounds, to see its author off to New Caledonia. Certainly many unimpeachable Unionists have been seen enjoying Mr. Yeat's Irish rebel play of *Kathleen ni Houliban* with a suspension of political wrath which did credit to their skill as playgoers, and if someone should write a good mystery to the honour and glory of the Church Schools Emergency League, or a Morality reflecting on 'temperance legislation' Liberals, no doubt, would bear up and enjoy themselves. • •

One grisly lion straddles across the path of this enlarged drama. The Examiner of Plays is said to regard politics, like religion and Biblical history, as one of the kinds of pitch that

his tender charge, the drama, cannot touch without being defiled. But, without absolutely trespassing on the contents of the King's Speech, the dramatists might find succulent pasture in such secondary matters as are said to be 'uncontentious,' because they rend parties internally rather than part them farther from each other. One's mind figures five poignant acts upon the currency, complicated perhaps with a tragedy of the heart—the widening gulf between the monometallic wife, staunch daughter of a line of monometalists, and the husband who loses the common faith of their youth in a single standard, each of them torn between affection for the other and horror of a life of error for their only child, hitherto trained to disdain the white metal—and, at the end, all these discords reconciled in the higher harmony of a joint concentration on paper, or cowries, as the perfect medium of exchange. Sagacious novelists have popularised spiritual trouble; what was long regarded as the annoyance of a few picked souls has been converted, on a sound commercial basis, into the recreation of countless nice young persons in Britain and America. Why not do as much for the Indian Budget? As Hamlet argues, nothing is light or stodgy but thinking makes it so. We are told that the function of art is to make us love what we have tried a hundred times before and found dull each time. Will no dramatic artist make us love the Civil Service Estimates?



## IN PRAISE OF CHARLIE CHAPLIN

BY ST. JOHN ERVINE

From *The Observer*, Feb. 27th, 1921

*Among the few distinctions of my life is that I bought the first article that St. John Ervine ever sold to a London daily, and I have a vivid recollection of our first meeting. He was an extraordinarily attractive young man, good-looking, cocksure, indeed without a suggestion of any hampering modesty. Since then, he has fought in the war and lost a leg, managed the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, and become a successful dramatist. He loves wordy warfare, and no man is better at 'barking away at the minxes.' And to me he is just the same sunny exhilarating friend as he was twenty years ago.*

LATELY, my head being exceedingly bloody, but, I trust, unbowed, I went forth in search of comfort, and by great good fortune, came upon a picture-palace where a film featuring Mr. Charlie Chaplin was being exhibited. I hesitated on the threshold of the theatre for a few moments, dubious for the first time in my life of Mr. Chaplin's power to dispel my dismal humour. 'I may have to endure a succession of pictures in which young women with big eyes and baby faces and incredibly innocent looks are wooed by rough diamonds whose principal means of earning a livelihood seems to consist of leaping on and off the backs of surpassingly swift ponies—and find that Charlie Chaplin fails to solace me for the tedium they occasion!' I said to myself, as I loitered on the doorstep. I remembered the name of a man whose friendship I had firmly rejected because he could not discover any merit in Mr. Chaplin. I could not continue to know a person so deplorably lacking in taste and judgment as that. But now, in such a state of dubiety was I, I wondered whether, after all, he had

not been in the right. *Perhaps Mr. Chaplin was not funny!* . . . It was not until I had reminded myself of the diversity of opinion in the world that I was able to pull myself together and enter the picture-palace. There are moments in which one foolishly believes that meritorious things immediately receive recognition—at least from persons of quality. I actually wrote this sentence on one occasion: ‘The mountains nod to each other over the heads of the little hills.’ I had forgotten that Tolstoy allowed little merit to Shakespeare; that Dr. Johnson preferred Samuel Richardson to Henry Fielding; that Meredith most ineptly disparaged Dickens, and considered that *Pickwick Papers* was perishable stuff. (And now Meredith himself is under a cloud, but Dickens persists!) And in our own time, has not Mr. Chesterton belittled Mr. Hardy? Remembering these things, I took courage and resolved to trust in my own faith and judgment. I advanced boldly to the box-office, paid money for a seat, and entered the darkened auditorium.

\* \* \* \* \*

I had remarkable luck. I took my seat just in time to see the beginning of a Chaplin film. Hardly had I sat down when that quaint, pathetic, wistful, self-dubious figure shuffled into the circle of light. He glanced about him in an uncertain fashion, twirled his cane twice, adjusted the position of his hat so that it became more unstable, twitched his features as if he were saying, ‘Well, what’s the good!’ and then walked down the street with that air of engaging incompetence which is the characteristic of all great comedians. And while, enchanted, I watched him pursuing his adventurous career, I began to wonder what is the peculiar quality which has endeared this comic little man, who spent his early life somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Walworth Road, to the whole world. Here am I, a dreary high-brow, who would go miles to see Charlie Chaplin on a film. There are you, who may be a low-brow or a no-brow-at-all, willing also to travel

great distances for a similar purpose. What is the quality possessed by this Cockney in California which reconciles such incompatibles in the bonds of laughter? I have a most vivid recollection of the first occasion on which I saw a Chaplin film. It was in France. A party of very tired and utterly depressed men came down one of those interminable ugly straight roads that take the spirit out of travellers. They were moving down from the 'line' to 'rest billets' after an arduous spell in outposts. The weather had been very hard and bitter, so that the ground was frozen like steel, and many of the men had sore feet and walked with difficulty. The roads were covered with snow that had turned to ice, and at frequent intervals a man would lose his balance and fall heavily to the ground with a great clatter of kit and rifle, and a sergeant or a corporal would curse without enthusiasm. Three times during that desolate journey the parties were shelled, once with gas. One heard the gas-shells going over, making that queer splashing noise that gas-shells make on their journeys, and wondered whether one would have enough desire for life left to induce one to put on a gas-mask! . . . I remember the party losing its way in a road where the snow was soft and knee-deep, in a road where misery had settled down so deeply on the men that no one swore and there was a most terrible silence, broken only by the sound of a man crashing on to the ground as he slipped on frozen places or by the sighs and groans of utterly exhausted boys. And I remember one of them, a very cheery lad from Dublin, suddenly losing heart for the first time in my knowledge of him, and turning to me and saying, 'God Almighty's very hard on us, sir!'

\* \* \* \* \*

In that state of dejection, tired and dirty and very verminous, with unshaven faces and eyes heavy with sleep and with a most horrible feeling that it did not matter who won the war, that lost party staggered into the rest billets at three

o'clock in the morning and were told that at the end of the week, instead of the promised Divisional rest they would receive orders to return to the line! I recall now that following that night of exhaustion came the job of cleaning up, a morning of bathing and scraping and louse-hunting, and then, in the evening, after tea, with some recovery of cheerfulness, the men went off to the big barn, in which the Divisional Concert Party gave its entertainments. There they sat, massed at the back of the barn, looking strangely childlike in the foggy interior, and listening without much demonstration to some songs. Their irresponsiveness was not due to inappreciation, but to something more terrible than individual fatigue—to an overwhelming collective fatigue, to a collective disgust, to the dreadful loathing of one's kind that comes from continuous association in congested quarters. And then the singing ended and the lights were diminished and the 'pictures' began. Into the circle of light thrown on the screen came the shuffling figure of Charlie Chaplin, and immediately the men forgot their misery and fatigue, and a great welcoming roar of laughter broke from them. That small, appealing, wistful, shuffling, nervous figure, smiling to disarm punishment, had only to show himself, and instantly a crowd of driven men forgot where they were and to what they were doomed and remembered only to laugh. That is an achievement which is very great.

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But the mere statement of such a thing does not explain the peculiar quality of Charlie Chaplin. What is it in him, that makes him distinct from all other men in his profession? I do not pretend to know what it is that separates him from other men, any more than I know what it was that made Shakespeare supreme and unique in his generation; but there are certain things about him which make him noticeably different from other film-actors. He is almost the only one of his profession

who can carry his personality through the camera. Marvelously he attains the third dimension on the screen, whereas others cannot muster more than two dimensions, and sometimes fail even to muster one. When you look at other comedians on the film, you are conscious of photographs of men, but when you look at Mr. Chaplin you are conscious only of a distinct human being. Like all great comedians whom I have seen, for example, Dan Leno or James Welch, he demands primarily, not your laughter, but your pity. A great comedian is like a child in his attitude towards the world, entirely trusting, rather helpless and a cause of laughter, not so much by deliberation as by sheer inability to cope with a complicated world. All the fun made by Mr. Chaplin comes, not from attempts to be clever, but from failures to be as other people are. Bergson, in his book on *Laughter*, tells his readers that laughter is the result of something mechanical being imposed upon something living—an explanation that does not appear to me to be complete or satisfactory. I do not know whether Mr. Chaplin can make philosophical speculations, but I do know that by his conduct he can explain much that puzzles philosophers; and it seems to me at times that Mr. Bergson might profitably study Mr. Chaplin before he produces a revised edition of *Laughter*. It is the child in Mr. Chaplin who excites our sympathetic laughter: the everlasting small boy, timorously defying authority and, in a panic, upsetting it. When Mr. Chaplin darts between the bobby's legs, throwing him to the ground, our elderly hearts are lifted up, for that is what we all longed to do. Mr. Chaplin makes boys of us all.

# 'STREET SCENE'

BY JOSEPH THORP

From *Punch*, Sept. 17th, 1930

*Joseph Thorp, the theatrical critic of Punch, is known to his friends as Peter. Nicknames are the privilege of the lovable, and more rarely of the ridiculous. Peter is entirely lovable and, despite his eccentricities, never ridiculous. He is a handsome, jerky man, who spends a great part of his life in building castles in the air. None of his castles is ever quite finished, but he lives cheerfully on the ground floors, until his next move. He only just escaped being a Jesuit priest, and there is a certain remnant of the Jesuit spirit (for which I hasten to add I have the greatest admiration) left in him. He writes as attractively as he lives.*

MR. ELMER RICE'S *Street Scene*, selected and adroitly interwoven incidents in the life of a 'Walk-up' Apartment (or, as we should, I suppose, say, tenement) House in a mean street in New York, definitely communicates to us that sense of suppressed excitement which it is the supreme function of the serious theatre to create; an excitement independent of romantic or horrifying incident in the story and due rather to an impression one has of being privileged to peep through a parted curtain into an unknown world and see it with eyes from which the scales have been removed—with an effect of revelation. There is indeed a horrifying climax, but I am not sure that the dramatic intensity of the whole did not begin to fail (if it failed at all) just at that moment. The impressive thing was the seemingly effortless way in which the pattern of this section of life was built up stroke by stroke.

Mr. Elmer Rice has evidently reached another stage in his pilgrimage of experiment—a transition stage between expressionistic symbolism and selective realism. It might perhaps

not unfairly be said that he is still more interested in type than individual, and here particularly in the street as an institution or microcosm rather than in the individual people that inhabit it. But this is little more than an academic criticism. If Mr. Rice breaks a classic and fundamental rule he breaks it triumphantly. Out of the crowded squalor flashes a swift flame of beauty. The heart of the beholder is wrung with pity, his mind impressed with the conviction of human dignity and courage in adversity. This is to succeed with a tragic theme, treat it how you will and break however so many of the accepted rules.

And though, with something like sixty characters to deal with in two short hours and a half, many can be little more than wraiths—‘an ice man, a letter-carrier, a milkman,’ etc., etc., etc.—we can remind ourselves that there have always been first and second murderers and the like; or we can perhaps with even more point assume that these undeveloped characters of our author are merely his chorus, labelled a little more precisely and given some sort of independent life, and so fit him into the classic frame—a well-meaning attempt which I should imagine he would view, hands firmly in pockets, with a supreme Transatlantic indifference.

His protagonists, at any rate, are vivid enough to dwell in the memory as individuals. There is the honest, orthodox, self-respecting wage-earner, *Frank Maurrant*, too much the possessive bullying male, and his shrinking wife, *Anna*, cast in a much more sensitive mould, hungry for a little tenderness and finding it, to the scandal of prying ugly-minded neighbours, with the furtive *Steve*, who passes like an embarrassed shadow under the eyes of his lover’s neighbours and husband on the chance of a few moments of stolen happiness. There is the *Maurrants’* lovely young daughter, *Rose*, her mother’s child without her mother’s weakness, tempted to escape from the unbearable ugliness and cruelty of the mean street to an

unloved pursuer, but drawn to the sensitive ineffective young Jew, poet and lawyer-to-be, *Sam Kaplan*, son of the glib doctrinaire Marxian, whose harangues so infuriate the truculent individualist, *Maurrant*.

A sweltering heat emphasises to an intolerable degree the lack of comfort and of privacy, heightens the sense of impending catastrophe and technically affords the author adequate excuse for interviews and exchanges otherwise unlikely on the crowded pavement. The scene, elaborately built up with impressive realism (even the asphalt-paving is by the Limmer and Trinidad Lake Asphalt Co. Ltd.), shows us basement, ground floor and first and second floors (English reckoning). Leaning from the windows, drifting or scurrying in and out of the crowded warren, gossiping on the steps, casually strolling by, the other fifty-five or so characters pass in review, each (or perhaps more accurately, most) contributing some relevant comment or reaction to the main theme—the self-righteous prurient chief gossip and mischief-maker of the apartment, her drunken husband, her brutalised thug of a son, her harlot-in-the-making of a daughter; the old Jew's daughter, *Shirley*, resolute to save her brother's career and detach him from the gentle puzzled *Rose*; the generous optimistic uxorious wop, *Fiorentino*, and his good-hearted German *Greta*; the faded little rabbit of a woman who is looking after her old mother; the agitated young clerk whose wife is expecting her first; and many more.

If the native talent and training of the principals and semi-principals had been of a lower grade or their drilling (the author was his own producer) less painstaking and effective, raw patches might have shown through. There were no perceptible raw patches. Of the individual performances one is content to eschew qualifications and praise unreservedly the *Anna* of Miss Mary Servoss, Miss Mary Grews' *Shirley*, Miss Erin O'Brien-Moore's genuinely moving *Rose*, Miss Millicent



Green's reckless little *Mae Jones*—a quite faultless and more positively a brilliantly observed and forcible performance—Miss Margaret Moffat's *Miss Jones*, and the not less distinguished playing of the men, Messrs. David Landau, Douglas Jeffries, Edgar K. Bruce, Abraham Sofaer, Charles Farrell, Campbell Logan and Stanley Vilven. Nobody, positively nobody, should miss seeing this affair. It has a universal appeal.

## THE FUNNY FELLOW

BY IVOR BROWN

From the *Week End Review*, March 15th, 1930

*Ivor Brown is the modern William Archer, for he is a Scotsman, and, as a youth, addicted to Ibsen. For all his apparent dourness, Archer loved the theatre, and though there never was a man less theatrical in himself than Ivor Brown, his success as a critic—no man's judgments are more respected—is, too, due first to his genuine enthusiasm for theatrical art, and, secondly, to his well-balanced judgment. Like most of the men of his generation—he is in the early forties—Brown is a little good-naturedly amused by those of us who have left the forties behind.*

I HAVE never understood why people consider it a duty to write such large and learned books on the Fundamentals of Tragedy, the Quintessence of Comedy, and so forth. The grave young men with beards who explain laughter seem so unnecessary. Perhaps it is simply idleness which causes me to simplify the issue, but I rest impenitently on my quite uncomplicated notion that tragedy and comedy are just aspects of frustration. A man tries to do something and fails; he is pitiful or laughable, according to his mood or ours. If his endeavour be high and serious, his failure is tragic; if it be trivial, or perverse, or preposterous, his failure is comic. The

king tumbles off his throne and makes a tragedy; the clown tumbles off his chair and makes a comedy. It is a difference of degree in frustration that separates our sympathy from our derision. Often, of course, there is no separation, tragedy riding on comedy's pillion—or t'other way round.

The funny fellows mirror the lesser frustrations of our life, but the thing works in two ways. There are the meek whose humour is to be frustrated; they are tripped, slapped, bilked, and sent empty away. There are also the aggressors whose humour is to frustrate; these are the dames with arms akimbo, the domineering landladies, the rasping Robeyish gadabouts who have, perchance, a sorry poverty of linen, but always get in the last (and rudest) word and leave the other fellow frustrated.

Comedy soars highest in popularity when the meek man, who has been under everybody's feet, turns and trips up the bully by some neat device. Both forms of frustration are then deliciously blended. Chaplin is the great mixer in this kind; thus to mingle disaster with triumph is the very heart of clownship. Fred Karno's little army was the chief school of instruction in this science of violent and assorted frustrations. Thence came Chaplin; thence Harry Weldon, who died this week.

Weldon's fun, apart from the oddities of mannerism, was essentially that of the victim. He would come lumbering on to the stage like a seedy and collapsing moon-calf, and then assume some bristling, bull-dog part like the prison-warder. He had an abundant genius for seeming all fingers and thumbs; he looked as little athletic as a plum-duff or stick of marzipan, and then putting on the gloves, he would hint at the monstrosities of manslaughter in the fate which he administered to Colin Bell. He seemed the very paragon of a puffy and yellow adiposity when he appeared as the indomitable goalkeeper, 'Stiffy Between the Sticks.' He was always a great bundle of failure and frustration, possessed with a tripp-

ing and a songful melancholy. He was ever needing courage and ever whistling for that gallantry. His main idiosyncrasy was to fire his sibilant catch-words at the gallery like a rocket hissing in the sky. "S no use' would take a minute or so to go round the house.

He over-played his tricks and over-worked his turns. The dragged last letter (Happy Mun-n-n) became a nuisance, but it says much for Weldon's power that he nationalised the nuisance in the end. I remember growing tired of Stiffy and the boxer. But they had been grand dolts and butts in their day, frustration-fodder for the relentless world to feed upon. Their creator died young; he was only forty-eight, but he had been a solo turn since eighteen, and the going was hard. The flabbiness and pallor which framed the jest of the frustrated athlete were not all of the paint-box. In the drudgery of four houses a night, he who gets puffed may suffer more hardly than he who gets slapped.

What a life it was, that battle of the lonely artist with the noisy, smoking, drinking, promenading audience. The funny fellow, most often appearing as a puny, insignificant, and frustrated wretch, had by sheer power and brilliance of his single attack to 'get' his audience in his first minute, to get and to hold and never to let go. Four times a night! There would be changes, too, of dress, and make-up, and hurried drives between one hall and another. And then, for a Christmas holiday, pantomime from 1 p.m. to 1 a.m.!

That, I suppose, was Harry Weldon's life during his best years of work. Things must be easier now, for the audiences, though possibly fewer, are better disciplined, drink less, and come to listen instead of to pass the time of night. It was amazing to see how some of the frail little men—Jack Pleasants, for instance—could handle an uproarious audience that began by being hostile and obstructive. Weldon, another of the Lancashire comics, was not frail, but he had to domi-

nate, not as the Robeys and Billy Bennetts do by an aggression worthy of an auctioneer, but by the power to turn his own lumpishness into something pathetic and even poignant. His chief creation was the cream-faced loon with a goose-look, an oaf scarcely urban, not of the mill, but of the potato-patch; of Lancashire, then of Ormskirk rather than of Bootle. Or ought he not, with that unbiddable sibilant of his, to have invented the Oswaldtwistle joke? Perhaps he did. It was the kind of noise that he might have made in his sleep. He lives in memory among the darling duffers and champions of a winning clumsiness, as English as a chop-house and as massive as Baked Albert Roll. Like many a great clown, he did not long endure or wait upon old age. Frustration of life came tragically to him who had so rightly mimed the farcical frustrations of the 'gormless' and the gowk.

## ALL THE WORLD'S MY STAGE

BY HANNEN SWAFFER

From *The Courier*, March, 1929

*Hannen Swaffer will always live in the history of journalism as a writer who has persuaded the editors of several great London newspapers to allow him to write continually about himself. Swaffer has personality, courage and conviction. He sometimes irritates one to madness, but he never fails to interest. He is indeed a real man, and he is in his essentials a simple and a kindly soul.*

I HAVE never confessed it before, but a few months ago, after I, as a critic, had slated a really disgraceful play, the lessee of the theatre wrote to me, 'Why don't you write a play yourself? I shall be honoured to stage it.' I was so flattered that I did not even reply.

Unsuccessful playwrights starve because they cannot buy food. Successful playwrights ought to starve because their tongues are always in their cheeks. If they take them out, even at meal-times, they forget their way back.

If a man has anything to say, the most laborious mechanism he can use is that of a theatre. All the time he is dependent on other people. Because he says a clever thing once, why should he have to let some one else say it for a year, merely because a comedian cannot earn £200 a week any other way?

Because I once wrote the words, 'God made the night dark so that in our dreams we could all be beautiful,' and 'Worms have more to do with the beauty of ruins than architects,' and the phrase, 'Think what horrible people drunkards would be if they had never tasted alcohol,' and other lines quite as pregnant with meaning, why should I make each sentence last for three hours, so that, when people come out, they can remark, 'What a lovely dress Gladys Cooper wore in the second act!'

The costumier really writes a fashionable play. The author only puts in the fools' stops.

There is a four-act play in every one of these lines. But each is best undramatised—just written down, printed, read, and then thrown away in the gutter. That is where we can touch the reflection of the stars.

No clever remark is worth saying twice. I say it once in a speech and then forget it. So does everyone else. Or I write it in a paper, and then throw it away. Or I say it at dinner, and someone else repeats it as his own. That is as it should be.

Playwrights dare not say anything original or clever. At dinner they are nearly all dumb. I told you they had their tongues in their cheeks. I have my cheek in my tongue. If they think of anything, they have to write it on their shirt cuffs, and then keep quiet until they get home. If they

hear you say anything clever, they write that down too. Then it is their play.

If I have something to tell the world, I write it in a newspaper. It is copied in other newspapers, chiefly because it is free, and so it goes all over the British Empire, even if my name is left out.

Then the next day I think of something else. The idea need not be dressed up into a set of fictitious characters, part of a plot that is a mere invention.

For every two thousand people who go to a particular play on one night, more than one million people read one particular newspaper the next morning. Besides, they believe newspapers.

If you write a play, you have to write about sex. No one can write what he thinks about sex. Sex does not interest me, I would rather write about Middlesex.

'She has no sex appeal,' I once heard a well-known manager say about a really great actress. Yet she is happily married, and is the mother of most intelligent children. 'There's not enough sex in it,' you hear a play-reader say of a manuscript. 'I must go and buy some sex appeal,' a leading lady said to me as we stood outside Clarkson's.

I wonder if you know that actresses belong to a profession in which their bodies are appraised as though they were standing in a slave market. And, as they judge the actresses' bodies, so they judge the authors' brains. If there is no sex appeal in his words, an author might just as well stick to trade. You need not be gross in the grocery.

At dinner, once, I was telling Somerset Maugham about a woman I had met the previous night, who had married in turn five husbands, all of whom were alive, and of all of whom she was equally fond. 'I have all the five bridal groups,' she said, 'and all the five wedding rings. And the last three husbands have been to tea with the first one's mother.'

'What a fine play that would make!' said Maugham.

'No,' I replied, 'it would make an admirable paragraph. In fact, it did, this morning. It is only interesting because it is true. You earn your living by making fact into fiction. I earn mine by making fact more true.'

Compared with life, fiction does not interest me: I always know a better true story than the false one I see staged. There is always a better story in the stalls. There is certainly always a more poignant tragedy. Actors are only interesting when they go home. *Then the real comedy begins.*

Most authors are much more interesting than the plays they write. You may not believe it, but Noel Coward is really an intelligent person. Frederick Lonsdale's anecdotes are more witty than his plays, John Galsworthy, as a dramatist, is not nearly as great as he is as a man. Bernard Shaw has transformed the world's future because he wrote prefaces, not because he wrote plays. His dramas would not alter a rabbit hutch. His prefaces made Lenin—and Lady Cynthia Mosley.

I should hate to see my play, if ever I wrote one. It would be acted all wrongly. I do not know five actors with brains. There is no actor in the world handsome enough for the hero I should imagine, no voice in creation beautiful enough to recite the love speeches I should write.

Shakespeare could never have foreseen that *Romeo and Juliet* would be acted by Americans. So that it would please a London manager, my play would have to be nonsense.

To be acted, it could not last for more than three hours. If I wrote a play, it would be about myself, in whom nobody but myself is interested. Besides, you wouldn't believe it. My stage character would want to talk all night. I should want to say a different thing at every performance, for I never think the same thing two days running. This is true of every living man.

I should want to write a play about how much better dogs

are than human beings, and no one would listen to that. The parts would have to be acted by dogs, too, and I object to performing animals, for their own sakes.

Or I might want to prove that the only brave people are those who will not fight, in any circumstances, and that would be thought unpatriotic. Certainly, I should want to prove that, if you hang a murderer, his family have to suffer more than he has, and that would be thought mere sentimentality.

My play would not pass the censor, because I should be my own. I am a critic, and when a man has a critical faculty highly developed, nothing is good enough for him.

'Oh, that has been said already,' I should say immediately I had thought of anything. It would not be original enough for me to write.

*The Way You Look at It* resembles *Iris*; the *Vortex* climax is in *Hamlet*. Pinero wrote *Easy Virtue* years ago in *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*. The best scene in *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney* is like one in *The Gay Lord Quex*. Even Shakespeare's plots were often old.

Going into the world of the theatre when you like, as I do, is amusing. Belonging to it, as the dramatist does, is a bore. Crippen belonged to it, and he became angry.

The only two reasons for people writing plays are that: (1) they want to be rich, and (2) that they cannot help it. I never wanted to be rich. *I have seen the rich people*. I can help writing plays. I have formed a league to stop myself. I am the only member of it, for all the other people in the world seem to be playwrights. But so far my league has been entirely successful. If ever I resign you must all join it. I must be stopped somehow.



## MR. CHESTERTON'S 'BLACK MAGIC'

BY H. W. MASSINGHAM

From *The Nation*, Nov. 15th, 1913

*The late H. W. Massingham possessed influence and authority greater perhaps than any other journalist of this century. He was an East Anglian and began his journalistic career on the staff of the Norfolk News. He was assistant editor of The Star when it was founded by T. P. O'Connor, was editor of the Daily Chronicle, for years wrote the Parliamentary sketch in the Daily News, and then founded The Nation, which he made the most important of the serious weeklies. Massingham was an advanced Liberal with strong Labour sympathies. He was a man of almost fierce honesty, who as he grew older found the trickery of politics almost intolerable. He was a very brilliant writer, and was extraordinarily versatile. He commanded admiration from his acquaintances and deep affection from his friends.*

WHAT is the true 'magic' of the theatre? Does it not reside in the power of the dramatist to excite to the uttermost the deepest feelings of his audience, to stimulate their sense of the sadness, or the fineness, or the coarseness, or the irony, of life? And is it not equally clear that for this purpose he is permitted and accustomed to use either 'natural' or 'supernatural' machinery, or to combine these forces, under the feeling that man is half a victim, half a contriver of Fate? Thus he may show Œdipus smitten by the Powers above (or below), and make him the innocent accomplice of his own shame; or Macbeth, lured by the powers of Hell along the path where ambition drives. But essentially there must be some profound human element in all these situations. You must feel that Hamlet's finely balanced nature is the kind of stuff to be set

on fire, even though it be a flickering fire, by a ghostly reminder that life is for doing as well as for dreaming; and that Don Giovanni needs to be taught that he must not carry spiritual pride too far, or Brand the pride of goodness. Heaven and Hell, therefore, playing their part in the drama of human experience, must be a spiritual Heaven and Hell.

‘Heaven but the vision of fulfilled desire,  
And Hell the shadow of a soul on fire.’

In this fashion the spirituality of things asserts itself in the most material age, through its accustomed vehicles of poetry and literature, passing, like the legend of Faust, from one hand to another, and losing some touch of coarseness or childishness in the process. But what one cannot stomach in this age is the sham spirituality, in other words the ‘magic’ which is the theme of Mr. Chesterton’s new drama. Let me illustrate what I mean by my own acquaintance with a great believer in the play of super-naturalism in this life—I mean Mr. Stead. Stead was a man of the most natural ‘magic’ in the world. He threw out ideas as boys throw balls at cocoanuts at a fair, now and then hitting the mark, and now going ludicrously wide of it. But always he suggested the presence and incessant working of an ill-trained but vivid and powerfully suggestive imagination. Only when he resorted to his ‘spooks’ and his ‘crystals’ did he become a bore of the first water, and I presume that it was his sense of my own affrighted and afflicted look when this hateful topic was turned on that spared me its grossest excesses. But what is Mr. Chesterton doing with this game of parlour magic? He is a critic not only of exquisite temper, but of the most delicate aversions, attractions, intuitions, well fitted to make the world examine its new-found treasures, and test and weigh them, lest perchance they should turn out to be dross. Therefore, it would be a calamity to find him among the mere wonder-workers, or

wonder-believers, the stuff in which all the Sludges of all the ages find their account, and from which they finally rub off that fineness of sensibility which is the true gift of genius.

It is for that reason that I quarrel with his play *Magic*, and with his stranger, the sham magician. In the first place, he is not magical and not strange. *Item*, he is an ordinary sentimental lover. *Item*, it is of no consequence to anybody whether or when he is Mr. Maskelyne, and whether or when he is a genuine wizard of Endor, making pictures tremble on the walls and chairs tilt on their legs, and turning red lamps into blue. *Item*, the work of the true magician is not to frighten people out of their wits, but out of their folly and wickedness. *Item*, the incidental introduction of the Devil is of equal insignificance, for he has nothing to do in or with the ridiculously neutral company on which he intrudes. Going about, as he does, like a roaring lion, seeking what statesmen, saints, priests, pimps, thieves, and hypocrites he may devour, Mr. Chesterton wastes his time and ours by introducing him where he is neither wanted nor unwanted. Now, a man of Mr. Chesterton's force of mind has no business to waste anything, even the Devil. Engage his Satanic Majesty in the tempting of woman to tempt man, as the Bible does, or the re-conquest of Heaven by the ruin of Earth, as Milton does, or reveal him, lurking deep, silent, and unsuspected in man's heart, as Burns does; but don't degrade him into a nervous shiver for old women massed round a table, or curates simpering in a ducal drawing-room. For the objection to this conjuring business is Mr. Walkley's, that Mr. Chesterton does not show his magician actually getting the rabbits out of the hat. There is, no doubt, an immense verbal parade of spiritual rabbits inside the hat. But in the moment of exodus you have a vision, not of rabbits, but of a muddled assortment of lining and felt, and of the conjuror's clumsy hands and obtrusively obvious shirt and sleeve-links.

Let me therefore suggest the reason why Mr. Chesterton's philosophy and Mr. Chesterton's play are both at fault. The trouble is that he deals with visible instead of invisible hats. Now, our so-called sceptical playwrights—Ibsen, Strindberg, Shaw, and Galsworthy—have a profound consciousness of being surrounded by a cloud of *invisible* witnesses, applauding or condemning, not the paper beliefs, but the concrete deeds, of their times. It is the sense of this encompassing host, of their embarrassing interventions and suggestions, which makes the drama that this generation is best fitted to hear and see. They describe an earthly city, or a sub-earthly one (is not Hell much like London?), while they desire a heavenly. Men's sins and their consequences, men's ignorance and its consequences, men's errors and their consequences, the true spiritual habit of those who attire themselves in this or that masquerade of character, my true relationship to my brother or sister, and his or hers to me—here is the ground of eternal mystery in which the average intellect gropes, and the superior mind sees clearly, while the dramatic genius lights it all up with serene fire from heaven or lurid flashes from hell. Here, if you please, is White Magic, created to confound the old common Black Magic of invocation and exorcism. And the proof of where the greater potency lies is that Ibsen's *Master Builder*, or Hauptmann's *Weavers*, answers the Christian test of suitability to the age, while Mr. Chesterton's *Magic* seems chiefly calculated to enshroud men's minds in the mists they and time have put behind them.

And really Mr. Chesterton has himself to blame for his failure. His vicars, and conjurors, and fairy-tale tellers, and his terrible young *pétroleur* from the States, are the merest fudge. But his Duke is a gem, as good in its way as those immortal muddlers, Mrs. Nickleby or Mr. Brooke of *Middlemarch*. For with the Duke Mr. Chesterton comes back to the dramatist's true business, which is the illumination of life for

the guidance of men, not of hollow turnips for the scaring of yokels. The proof of this is that the Duke is actable as well as laughable; whereas the necromancer and his foils, being mere stage properties, can only be stiffly posed and laboriously counterfeited. Mr. Chesterton must really cheer up. I will tell him a secret, which I had from an incidental angel in Fleet Street. The Middle Ages do not merely seem to be over; they *are* over.

# MUSIC



## VERDI AT VERONA

By H. C. COLLES

From *The Times*, Aug. 23rd, 1930

*Henry Cope Colles, born in 1879, followed J. A. Fuller Maitland in 1911 as chief musical critic of The Times. The excerpt chosen is taken from a series of articles written during a lengthened stay in Italy. In 1923 he accepted and filled with distinction for three months the position of Guest Critic to the New York Times.*

‘THERE is no hurry; you have a poltrona,’ said the waiter as he put down the coffee. But I did hurry; gulped the coffee, finished a cigarette as I crossed the piazza and joined the crowd at the entrance to the Arena—not from any fear that the announcement ‘ad ore 21 precise’ would be interpreted with the literalness of Sir Henry Wood beginning a Promenade Concert, but because for a foreigner the crowd itself was likely to be the best part of the show.

The Arena of Verona, second largest of the existing Roman circuses (the Colosseum of Rome is the first) holds about 25,000 people, even when a large section of the ellipse is cut off for stage and orchestra. Poltrone (30 lire) and the still more plutocratic poltronissime (60 lire) filled the floor space, and were still more or less empty when I reached the iron garden-seat which was my poltrona for the evening. Already the stone sides of the Arena were packed tier above tier with a seething, happy crowd of holiday-makers. It was the Sunday of the Ferragosto. The conversation of an English crowd coalesces into a general buzzing from which individual shouts emerge. Italian voices, like Italian motor traffic noises, find no common denominator. Each one is heard over the whole Arena as its own exuberantly strident self. The vendors of



libretti, of beer, of ices, of anything and everything which can beguile the waiting time, have to contend not with a general background of talk, but with each jest hurled from the topmost tier bringing a laugh from the whole assembly, in which every laughter's voice seems clearly distinguishable—an amazing sight and sound.

Then there was the 'Festa dei moccoletti.' The big arc lights over the auditorium went out. A trumpet sounded, and presently the dark mass of humanity was changed to a horse-shoe of a myriad twinkling lights. Everyone was supplied with a little candle to contribute to the Festa. Further signals; giant cymbals beaten with drum-sticks or some such penetrating noise with a 'sizzle' in it, and then the little candles go out, the horse-shoe becomes dark and human again, and Signor Giuseppe del Campo is in his place at the head of the large orchestra with stick uplifted to begin the overture.

The opera was *La Forza del Destino*. At first my hopes of hearing it sank. Opera to the Italian populace is still an affair of singers and stage rather than a piece of music. Verona and Bayreuth are poles apart. The shouts went on, and a sibilant sizzling of protest did more to obliterate the music than to quiet the shouters. The overture struggled for existence, but was applauded at the end as though it had been listened to with the deepest attention. At first, too, it seems that *La Forza del Destino* is not the ideal work for such a representation as this. It has only one scene, that of the military camp culminating in the brilliant 'Rataplan' finale, to employ the full resources of such a stage as that of the Arena. The most was made of this. It was the more gorgeous for its isolation, a sudden blaze of light in which troops, Spanish and Italian, peasants, gipsies, 'vivandiere,' made patterns of vivid colour in scintillating movement.

For this, however, one must wait long. Destiny is exerting its force not through the movements of armies and in the

affairs of countries, these are but decorative accessories, but on the fates of individuals, the principal characters of Piave's drama. So Act I begins with a domestic conversation between father and daughter and ends with a personal tragedy, in which the father meets death accidentally at the hands of the daughter's lover. Fate and an avenging brother pursue the lovers through many vicissitudes, till (at something after 1 a.m. on this occasion) they fall into each other's arms, the woman dying, both wearing the Franciscan habit and receiving the blessing of the Superior of the Order. It is a typical romance of the operatic stage, and one in which the sequence of events need not be very closely followed, but the individuals must stand well forward.

At first the voices sounded so distant, so much more distant than those of the irrepressible audience, one wondered what the upshot would be. Act I, a short one, went for very little, but an Italian audience, however Bank Holidayfied, can be counted on to listen to singing, and with the gay scene in the village inn which begins Act II, containing the fortune-telling song of the gipsy, a part very brightly played by Mme. Gianna Pederzini, the stage conquered, ears became more alert, one began to get the measure of the music in the vast space. Afterwards one could forget the exceptional conditions, could listen as though in an ordinary opera house, and even be surprised on looking up at the end of an aria to find that the stars were the only roof.

Musically the performance was of a high order. Many of the singers were those who are well known at Covent Garden, at the Scala in Milan, and other houses. Mme. Bianca Scacciati (Leonora) and Signor Francesco Merli (Alvaro) were the lovers. The one excelled in the prayer of Leonora at the door of the convent, a song with a simple soaring melody which would be commonplace if it were not so intensely felt; the other made much of the many opportunities which a theme

of passion and of war offers to a tenor. The scena 'La vita è inferno,' at the beginning of Act III, is one of the finest of them, not only for its vocal part, but because it contains touches of Verdian orchestration, particularly in the use of the wood-wind, bassoon arpeggi, etc., which foreshadows the composer's manner in *Aïda*. There is indeed a good deal of the first-rate Verdi in this opera, sudden flights of melody and strokes of orchestration which no one but he would have thought of. The orchestra was amazingly effective in the Arena, and Signor del Campo's decisive direction produced perfect cohesion.

*La Forza del Destino* certainly contains a wealth of varied humanity. And how this crowd loved its variety! Fra Melitone's sermon to the populace, and still more that scene in which from feeding the poor he turns to belabouring them with his enormous soup ladle, brought peals of laughter. Italian opera at home is not the stilted thing it becomes when it goes abroad and is called 'grand opera.' Levity and gravity are taken naturally as they come. It is a slice of life heightened by the spectacle and idealised in the music. And Verdi's music is exactly right for such an audience in such a place. It bends readily to the mood of every moment. It takes the common stock of tunes and does more with them than a common man could do. Its highest strokes of genius are achieved with consummate ease. No one can say, This is beyond me; yet no one but a prig need say, This is beneath me. Everything is clear and there is no search after impressiveness. Small wonder that on a summer night too good for bed, the crowd are loth to leave the Arena when the last strains die away and the lights go out.

## TOSCANINI'S LAST BOW

BY FERRUCCIO BONAVIDA

From the *Daily Telegraph*, June 5th, 1930

*Ferruccio Bonavia, born at Trieste in 1877, is a musical composer, and was originally a practising musician, whose many engagements included that of violinist in the Hallé Orchestra at Manchester. As a musical journalist he first became known in England in the columns of the Manchester Guardian, and is to-day one of the best-known contributors to the Daily Telegraph. The extraordinary interest shown by the musical public in the interpretations of Toscanini as an orchestral conductor gives point to this excerpt from Mr. Bonavia's writings.*

THE last of the remarkable series of concerts given by the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York, under the conductorship of Arturo Toscanini, took place last night at the Queen's Hall. As could be expected the auditorium was packed, and there was great enthusiasm at the close. The audience, led by Mme. Melba, who stood right under the conductor's podium waving a white scarf, could not tire of cheering the orchestra and recalling the conductor.

The programme consisted of Beethoven's 'Eroica,' Brahms's Variations of a Theme of Haydn, the Bach-Respighi Passacaglia, concluding with Wagner's 'Meistersinger' Overture.

## FRESHNESS AND MASTERY

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to single out for special praise any one of these items or any part of them. All was marked by the same freshness, the same perfection of orchestral discipline, the same mastery in the reading. The steadfast loftiness of the symphony was matched by the bril-

liance and sweetness of the Brahms variations. The wonderful sonorities of the 'Passacaglia,' balanced exactly the vigour and neatness of the overture. And perhaps, in the circumstances, it will not be amiss if instead of detailed description we recall our general impression of these four memorable concerts.

The marvellous finish of every performance given by Toscanini and the New York Orchestra has evoked a certain amount of curiosity as to the method wherewith such results are obtained. If perfection could be obtained by methods there would be no great difficulty in answering such questions. But there is as much of that indefinable element we call genius in the interpretative as in the creative artist, and we can no more explain exhaustively why one conductor is superior to another than we can give reasons why one man's music moves us profoundly, while another's leaves us cold.

But if we cannot reduce genius or even talent to a method, we can observe and define the ways in which it works and expresses itself. Toscanini's memory, Toscanini's insight, are natural gifts. Where nature has been less generous, no remedy avails. But it is interesting to note that these exceptional and valuable qualifications have bred in him a sense of humility rather than of power. It is impossible to watch him at work without feeling the conviction that this man is the servant of the composer, that he expresses not his own, but the composer's thought. This is borne out also by the fact that while any third-rate pianist never hesitates to speed the pace or retard it as the spirit moves him, while many third-rate conductors have had no scruple in tampering with orchestral scores of great masters, Toscanini never departs from the written note, and invariably gets to the spirit by following scrupulously every indication the composer has given. He resembles in this Hans Richter, the sum total of whose alteration in the vast repertory that was his, consisted of one bar in the first violin part of the Ninth Symphony.

## INDIVIDUAL MODESTY

Some of the wonderful effects we heard from the New York Orchestra can also be traced to a form of modesty and humility. For the conductor had obviously instilled in the players the value of self-effacement. No one seemed anxious to preen himself, to call attention to his own gifts and cleverness. Soloists of very great ability and distinction shone for a brief while at the right moment to become merged in the rest of the orchestra as soon as that moment was past. The violin solo in 'Death and Transfiguration,' for instance, was played with greater softness—and, consequently, with greater tenderness—than ever before. The outcome is that no single part stands out more than it is meant to do and that we see the corporate spirit in perfection.

It is all of a piece with the vast range of soft tones and colours which is characteristic of any orchestra conducted by Toscanini. For while his right hand marks clearly and forcibly the rhythm, his left restrains far more often than it urges the players.

The rare excellence of the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York is, of course, beyond question. Their full tone conveyed a sense of force and ordered energy as different from sheer heavy weight as the eloquent delicacy of their soft passages differed from thinness.

They are a Stradivarius amongst orchestras, but the man who played upon that exquisite instrument certainly deserved no less.

## UG

BY EDWIN EVANS

From the *Musical News and Herald*, Oct. 15th, 1921*Edwin Evans has made exhaustive study of the intricacies of modern music.*

PROBABLY most people are more or less affected by the sound of names, and especially place-names. Not only are these often charged with suggestion, but an ear that is attuned to music cannot be insensitive even to their phonetic quality. I have spent some restful holidays in a Wiltshire village, my acquaintance with which began through my discovering its name in a railway guide and liking the sound of it. And, several years before this, I paid my first visit to that county out of curiosity to find out whether two other villages, Teffont Evias and Teffont Magna, could possibly live up to such charming designations. I am told that they are mentioned in Domesday Book, but as there has never been, to my knowledge, a cheap edition of that fascinating compilation, I am unable to vouch for it.

Picture me, then, setting forth gaily from Salisbury on foot for a pilgrimage to the Teffonts. The first shock came before I had reached Wilton. It was a place called Fugglestone. There was no escaping the name. A sign-post saw to that. But it also acted as a warning. For all I know, Fugglestone may be a delightful spot, but I could not face it. I passed on, and, a couple of miles further, reached Ugford, which sounds worse. I could have turned back, but I thought that, having stored in my memory two such names as Fugglestone and Ugford within an hour, I owed myself Teffont Evias and Teffont Magna as

compensation. Never had I met such extremes in one country ramble.

No doubt readers are already asking what on earth all this has to do with music. I will explain. Such names as Ugford and Fugglestone stand, after all, for certain virtues. If they are uncouth they are also honest. They are unsophisticated and of the soil; they suggest even that brand of the latter of which a liberal allowance accompanies one's return from such a ramble. There is in them much of the sturdiness that has contributed to 'make England what she is.' Let us not remove them from the map, or we might lose something of what they stand for, but let us not exaggerate this at the expense of what we owe to Teffont Evias and Teffont Magna. During the last few years a doubt has been assailing me whether, in British music of to-day, the tendency is not towards too much Ugford and Fugglestone and proportionately too little Teffont. Oh! of course, it is vastly better than when our music savoured so much of Brunswick Place and Mecklenburgh Square. At least it is English. But there are many Englands, and I am beginning to look with misgivings upon the increasing prominence given to this particular one. Corduroy has sterling qualities, but one must not overestimate the functions that belong to it. Moreover, while some pioneers of the English movement donned it from conviction, I now suspect the influence of fashion. Fugglestone has become a show-place. Soon Ugford will be a shrine. Then we may have composers to whom such attire will be as becoming as the Tyrolese costume is to an obese Saxon brewer on holiday in the Alps, or that of the Highlands to our own new rich. Then that same ug-sound will acquire new value as a vigorous monosyllabic expletive. It has an expressive quality: Ug!

It also has associations. As a retort to 'Damrosch on Ugliness,' it is almost as effective as his own name. For a conductor who is to re-visit us in January to make such a remark, he



must have inherited the tact of his ancestry. What did he mean by 'grovelling in ugliness'? It clearly had no reference to the Ugford manner, for even as shortsighted an observer as he would scarcely describe Ugford as grovelling. It is, at times, even truculent. As for ugliness, I find it very difficult to recall any music, of whatever nationality, deserving that description. An ugly progression, maybe, or even a page of ugly scoring, but ugly music, no. In fact, it would not be easy to write. Mediocrities may fail to achieve beauty, but it would need a remarkable man to achieve consummate ugliness. Ineffectuality in itself is not ugly, whether in a composer—or a conductor. It is merely tedious. It takes character to make either a great saint or a great sinner. Most people are just so-so. But Damrosch did not mean this, any more than he meant Ugford. I am not sure that he really meant anything at all. It may have been just the groan of a sexagenarian on finding the pace here unexpectedly strenuous and the standard inconveniently exacting. It was unfortunate in its expression, but in reality a plea for sympathy.

That forceful syllable—I am beginning to like it now—has another connotation in smugness, the most protean of anti-social vices. There is rural smugness and there is urban smugness. There is that of the professional and that of the dilettante, both equally offensive. In our satisfaction at having, at long last, thrown off the Victorian smugness, there lurks the incipient germ of a neo-Georgian smugness, the growth of which has recently become perceptible. Like many other neo-Georgian characteristics, it is not so much a change as an inversion of manner. Where our Victorian grandfathers smugly did one thing, there is a tendency among their grandchildren smugly to do its opposite, not because one is more natural than the other, but because it has become a convention of to-day to upset those of the day before yesterday. It can be observed almost everywhere. Among musicians it is perhaps

most clearly perceptible in those who are serving their indentures, and, by one of those tricks of historical coincidence, the germ of this new smugness may be met sometimes in a thoroughfare sacred to the memory of the Prince Consort. Perhaps it may have migrated thither from the Slade, where it had previously had the time of its youthful life. I am reminded of a conversation that I once had with a group of young artists who appeared to be under the illusion that the wearing of comic clothes was a defiance of convention. It is, of course, nothing of the kind. Respect of convention is shown in both ways: by obeying it and by consciously disobeying it. Both are an acknowledgment of its power. The only way of showing disrespect is by ignoring its existence and not wasting a thought upon whether one happens to be obeying it or not. Incidentally, that is also the only way of killing a convention. To persecute a convention is liable to have the same effect as the persecution of the early Christians.

We all know how irritating is the attitude of superiority. We shall presently learn how irritating the attitude of consciously avoiding anything that savours of superiority may become. Both will always remain attitudes, however much the neo-Georgian attitude may protest that its essence consists in not being one. And smugness is the fungus of attitudes. There is something in human nature that makes it extremely difficult to adopt any kind of attitude without conveying at the same time the conviction that it is superior to all other attitudes, and therein lies smugness. The remarkable creative activity in British music of to-day alternately helps the germ and fights it. It helps it by giving us the pretext for a reasonable pride, which we have not had for some generations, and it fights it by making most of us far too busy to have time to fall victims. Work is the prophylactic against all insidious germs. Just as smugness was most rampant among painters who talked ten times as much as they painted, it is most clearly discernible in

musicians who neither make nor aid music. But it is, nevertheless, an anti-social vice, and as such a danger. It was an etymological inspiration to bestow upon it that forceful and expressive ug-sound.

Our national poet was asking a purely rhetorical question when he inquired, 'What's in a name?' He knew—none better—that in a name there may be a thousand years and more of a people's history, the symbol of a world-literature, not to speak of a religion or a landscape. In the name of Ugford there was at least this article, which in a reflective moment I have extracted from it, and for which I offer profuse apologies to its inhabitants. But, as I said at the outset, most of us are affected by the sound of names. Perhaps even the animal companions of man share this susceptibility. I am not thinking of the moral proverb, 'Give a dog a bad name,' so much as of the demeanour of a dog under the burden of having to answer to an unbecoming or undignified name. I have named a cat of my acquaintance Rivar, after a stately Wiltshire hill, since when he has developed the dignity of a monolith.

## THE VIOLIN IN RELATION TO CHAMBER MUSIC

By W. W. COBBETT

From *The Strad*, June, 1930

*My friend, W. W. Cobbett, is the most wonderful old man whom I have ever known. Thanks to his energy and astuteness he was able to retire from business at the age of sixty, and since then, for something over twenty years, he has devoted himself to the practice and study of music, an art of which he has been a constant patron; his knowledge culminating in the production of his massive work, A Cyclopaedic Survey of Chamber Music. Incidentally, he is a most accomplished violinist. But music by no means exhausts the interests of this marvellous old man. He is a great reader with very fine taste, a good billiard player, and a most charming companion.*

ONCE, when 'talking fiddles' with a vivacious young student, who persisted in regarding the violin as a solo instrument, I drew from its case my Guarneri, which has been my constant companion for half a century, and chattered to it somewhat in this strain: 'Giuseppe,' I said, 'you are a fine fellow and you come of a fine family. If your halo shines less brightly than Stradivari's, the reason may be that there are so few of you—not a solitary viola or 'cello stands to your credit. But you were more original than Antonio, by experts esteemed as highly, and thought by Paganini to be the best of all. As to that scandalous story about "Prison Josephs," I refuse to believe a word of it. How satisfied you must be with yourself and your apostolic title "del Gesù." You and your like have held me in thrall during the best part of a lifetime. To those of your bond slaves who are able to take advantage of them you offer facilities for the production of sustained tone,

vibrato, portamento, and pure intonation which turn your brethren of the percussion green with envy. Splendid qualities these, but you must not be puffed up with pride. Remember that no violin can charm by its own unaided powers. You are only half an instrument. If perfect music is to be made, your harmonic complement must be found, and your master must seek the companionship of pianist, violist, or 'cellist, without whose co-operation you are powerless to hold him captive for long. Let me whisper it into those F holes of yours which serve you for ears—when played alone you are just a *little* tiresome, but when well played in good company you are of all instruments the most enchanting.'

My youthful friend laughed at my roundabout way of singing the praises of chamber music, and thought me rather mad, but was nevertheless impressed. The truth is that the pleasures of unaccompanied violin music are limited to Bach and a few especially beloved studies, whereas the pianist, lucky man, has a whole orchestra at command, and an inexhaustible repertory awaiting the touch of his unaided fingers. Were I in his place I might conceivably have fallen to the attractions of an instrument so self-contained, and, closeting myself with the master works of Beethoven, Chopin, and the rest, become in a musical sense a recluse. As it is, I hug to my heart an instrument whose incompleteness is that of the human voice, an incompleteness to which I owe my gravitation towards ensemble music. It has made of me a gregarious musician, finding satisfaction in the company of my fellows, than which no better fate can befall any man who is not a born cynic, during the brief term of his terrestrial existence.

## THE ARTIST AND THE GENTLEMAN

By W. J. TURNER

From the *New Statesman and Nation*, March 28th, 1931

*W. J. Turner, the musical critic of the New Statesman, is a young man with strong opinions and judgments of his own, which he expresses week after week with admirable facility. He is also a poet of distinction and sometimes of daring.*

WHAT has given rise since the Restoration to the two modern and, as I think, fallacious conceptions current in England which represent all that is most feeble and vicious in this country and by which often the best foreign minds are antagonised against us? One of these conceptions is that which chiefly exercises foreign critics who study England, the idea of a 'gentleman.' That this valuable word has suffered a corruption like the word 'genteel' is obvious to all reflecting persons. The proof of this corruption is that M. Siegfried is able (with almost complete truth) to define the English conception of 'gentleman' to-day as: 'A gentleman never strives too much. He does nothing too well. His perfect manners are acquired at the price of the stuff of which heroes are made.'

From the Renaissance to the Restoration the ideal of a gentleman was to be a scholar and a man of action, a poet, a soldier and a musician—essentially a man who was passionately serious about intellectual and spiritual things, who lived for *service*, service to his religion, his country, his intellectual ideals and his fellow-countrymen. Every gentleman was emotionally educated and not merely technically educated:

I could not love thee, dear, so much  
Loved I not honour more.

Such words, hackneyed out of all meaning by superficial repetition, are still a witness to a once existing emotional education which has vanished. The word 'honour,' for example, has no longer a living existence. What is the cause of this change, of this shrinking of the conception of 'gentleman' down to that of a half-wit who gapes at the mention of philosophy or music or poetry, who thinks it bad form even to take cricket seriously, as the Australians, for example, take it, and who grumbled at the Germans attempting to win a war by gas when he was only attempting to win it by guns and bayonets?

Of course, England, luckily, does not yet consist of such half-wits, nor perhaps is even the average English gentleman such a 'gentleman.' But that this is the ideal most current is obvious to ourselves, not only to M. Siegfried, and how dangerous it is many were aware before M. Siegfried pointed it out. This divorce of the mind from the body, of intellectual and emotional education from technical education, was partly I believe, the result of Puritanism. The Puritans monopolised seriousness and religion, and to the returning cavaliers and the nation restored to moral freedom at the Restoration, henceforth seriousness was to be avoided like the plague. The nation divided into halves and the nonconformist movement accentuated and deepened the cleavage. Art became a frivolous amusement, music a light entertainment imported from abroad, and a gentleman was a trifle and a courtier or a coarse, guzzling country bumpkin, 'shootin', ridin' and fishin'.'

The inevitable reaction would have come if it had not been for the industrial revolution. This opened a fresh avenue for the youth of the nation who could not all (in their increasing numbers) have become psalm-singers or idlers. More and more they went into trade and commerce, and they went as barbarians, emotionally uneducated. Barbarians we have remained ever since, because we have lost the tradition of the

Renaissance and have at our schools no emotional education whatsoever. There is scholarship for a few exceptionally gifted boys; there are athletics also, chiefly for a minority. For the average mass there is merely a certain routine instruction and a ruthless apprenticeship in make-believe. I am told by Mr. Robert Mayer (organiser of children's concerts) and others that there is the greatest difficulty at our public schools in getting sufficient time for boys to learn music and to practise even when there are good music teachers. The music masters, who had a conference some time ago, are not always of a good type, but are often weak and still have the feeling that they exist on sufferance. This brings me to the second conception, that of the artist.

It has sometimes been my unfortunate experience when eminent foreign musicians have come over here to hear their criticism of our English conditions. Like M. Siegfried, they tend to explain our lack of ambition, of seriousness, of any exactingness towards ourselves and our own efforts as the result of this unfortunate conception of the 'gentleman,' whose ideal it is to be superficial, careless, a faker, a trifler and a bluffer. In vain I have tried to explain to them that this is not the old idea of an English gentleman, but only the modern one. For them the word 'gentleman' has come to mean something as shoddy as the word 'genteel' has with us. And what in the Renaissance would have been a gentleman is what they, in their modern terminology, would call an 'artist.' Now this is a conception of 'artist' that is still unknown in England. In England the word 'artist' has a connotation as degraded as that of the word 'gentleman.' An 'artist,' whether he paints, writes, sculpts, composes or designs, is, to the modern vulgar English mind, not a *poet* in the Greek sense, that is, one who makes something well, but a feeble, effete, whining, sentimental creature who hates to make an effort, but loves to be among 'beautiful' things. To the common mind (and by that



I mean the mind of the average ex-Public School boy even more than of those educated at the council and board schools) the clear distinction between two opposite types, the æsthete and the artist, does not yet exist. It would surprise him as much to be told that by an 'artist' we mean a man tough, hard, disciplined, severely trained, whose function it is to create new modes of thought and of feeling, and to keep alive the human spirit, as it would to be told that the function of a gentleman is to give to the world more than he receives from it. But whereas the service of a 'gentleman' (old-fashioned sort) is to his country and his fellow-men, the service of an artist is to his art, and that may sometimes involve him in friction with many of his fellow-men whom he may thoroughly respect. How inferior are the conceptions of 'gentleman' and 'artist' in daily use may be perfectly seen from Mr. A. P. Herbert's *Tantivy Towers*, in which we have both reduced to their lowest common measure as mere egoists, and this is exactly how they appear to-day in the eyes of the majority of the readers of *Punch*, which caters so cleverly for this emotionally uneducated public.

This ignorance, this immaturity of large sections of the population, are due chiefly, I think, to the lack of emotional education when young. Boys at school are treated not as young human beings of infinite potentialities, but as young puppies to be kept out of mischief. On leaving school everybody to-day is plunged into a society where, emotionally undeveloped and undisciplined, they must get what education they can. The chances are thousands to one against them. Very soon they will acquire habits of which the worst will be that of following always in their emotions the line of least resistance. There are thousands who will day-dream and night-dream in a cinema while idly allowing meaningless clap-trap to float pictorially before them, thousands to one who will make the intellectual and moral effort to read a hard book or

hear a symphony concert, where he will encounter real thought and feeling formally expressed. It is nobody's business to supply any emotional education to the people. It is done chiefly by the writers and painters and musicians—in other words, the 'artists,' who take their work seriously and are to-day the only people who behave as gentlemen in the old sense of the word. For what do they get out of it? Not money; that is mainly got by those who exploit the public to their own advantage by flattering it or manipulating it.

But the 'artist' cannot do this public work alone. He is dependent upon publishers, concert agents, art galleries, institutions and organisations of all sorts. And these organisations—all organisations, institutes, colleges of music or science or art—are in themselves nothing. They depend entirely upon the human beings behind them for their value. And everything finally depends upon whether this human being is a gentleman or not. If he is there to enrich himself or his friends, if he is an exploiter or a careerist, then he is not a gentleman and he is useless to the artist, to art and to humanity. That the public to-day is in a bad situation is recognised by all thinking persons. It is the recognition of this fact that has, for example, in the field of music caused Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Courtauld to found the Concert Club, which offers the employees of banks, insurance companies, and all other commercial firms, the opportunity to hear good music and good musicians at prices as low as those of the average West-End cinema. But people who reach the age of eighteen and twenty without ever having had the opportunity of hearing good music are in danger of being past helping. It is in the schools and during childhood that those two inseparable and complementary human beings, the artist and the gentleman, are formed, and it is upon them that the moral, as distinct from the technical, future of the race depends.



## SPORT



## A CADDIE OF THE LOTHIAN

BY BERNARD DARWIN

From *The Times*, May 8th, 1925

*Mr. Bernard Darwin is a grandson of the great Darwin, a most attractive open-air man with pleasant humour, whose genius as a journalist is to be found in the fact that he can make golf interesting to the minority of us who have never played the game, who have not the least sort of idea what sort of instrument a niblick is, or why slicing is regarded as a deadly sin.*

THE memories of this last tour of the Oxford and Cambridge Society in the Lothians will be to the full as pleasant to recall as those of the old ones, but this time, if I could have the photograph I want to paste in my book, it should not be of any group of players, but of the brown, grinning, resolute little face of my caddie. This was a great little boy, and it was a lucky chance by which I picked him up, one of an importunate throng in the streets of Gullane. He told me early in our acquaintance that he was one of the best caddies in Gullane, and I do not quarrel with the description. He was very keen on the game, and once, at a critical moment at Luffness, broke into rapturous if subdued clapping. But he was still keener, I think, on birds and beasts, so that a round with him resembled, to borrow a famous title, a naturalist's voyage round the world. He dragged me far into the rough at Gullane to show me a plover's nest with eggs in it. At another time he found a lark's nest. But he was happiest of all—and I admire his taste—at Archerfield. When he first came through the curtain of wood into that entrancing spot, he was, for the space of almost two holes, dumb with ecstasy. Then he broke

out: 'This is a bonny wee place. You can see nothing but the rabbits and their wee white tails.' A little later he dashed away for a moment, and reappeared holding a baby plover in each of his pudgy brown hands. I should add that he replaced them very tenderly whence they came.

Yet he was no mere dreamer. On one course my companion hooked a ball into a neighbouring garden, of which the owner was declared to be a fire-eater who allowed no balls to be retrieved, but played with them himself. Then all the man of action in him awoke. He cast down my clubs as one lightening himself of his armour for a forlorn hope, took cover and crept, bending low under the stone wall, climbed over the barbed wire, casting ever and anon wary glances at the silent house, and finally reappeared in triumph with the ball, sucking a wounded finger. Some day I shall be able to boast that a great man once carried my clubs.

## MLLE. LENGLEN'S VICTORY

BY WALLIS MYERS

From the *Daily Telegraph*, July 9th, 1919

*Mr. Arthur Wallis Myers is to lawn tennis what Mr. Bernard Darwin is to golf, that is he has genius enough to make a report of a Wimbledon tournament something like literature. He began his journalistic career on the old Westminster Gazette, and where could man begin better? During the war he did good service in the Foreign Office, and he not only writes about lawn tennis, but himself plays it so well that he has captained English teams in South Africa and India.*

THE greatest ladies' challenge round in the history of lawn tennis. After twenty years' experience of the game in many countries and amid many vicissitudes the historian has need

for circumspection, but one may safely declare that the match between Mrs. Lambert Chambers and Mlle. Lenglen on the centre court to-day has never been equalled in the high quality of its play, the sustained uncertainty of its issue, and the tense excitement of its finish. The circumstances surrounding this contest were unique; so were the attendant attributes. On the one hand was a British player who had won the blue riband of the lawn on seven occasions, and had not been beaten at Wimbledon for eleven years—a lady who, if she had retained her title to-day, would have retired from singles with a record superior to that of Willie Renshaw on the men's side; on the other a young French girl, born in the devastated province of Picardy, who had brought her racket across the Channel for the first time, and who was playing on a surface and before a crowd foreign to her nature, and perhaps inimical to her training.

Small wonder that a contest between these two to decide the World's Championship should have expressed the culminating interest in a championship meeting already remarkable for its popular appeal and its cosmopolitan competition; nor that the relatively small resources of the All England ground—almost a miniature arena beside the giant stadium at Forest Hills, New York—should have been strained to the uttermost; nor that, when the vast throng discovered to their great delight that the King and Queen, paying a surprise visit with their daughter, shared the intense enthusiasm of their subjects, the occasion was felt to be altogether unprecedented.

#### THE KING'S INTEREST

The advent of the Royal party had wisely, in view of the crowded ground, been kept a secret by the executive. His Majesty had let it be known to Commander Hillyard, R.N. (with whom he served as a middy on the *Britannia*) that he desired no ceremony; that he came in a private capacity, as a



former president of the All England Club. It was well known, too, that Princess Mary is a player of considerable promise, and has witnessed matches at Queen's Club. Motoring down from London after the victory march of London troops, the distinguished visitors arrived shortly after three o'clock, during the progress of a double in which two Australians, a New Zealander, and an Englishman were participating. Their appearance in the committee box (of which Lord Curzon, Admiral Beatty, and Mr. Hughes were also occupants during the afternoon) was met with a burst of cheering from nearly 10,000 throats, the match being 'held up' while the ovation lasted. The King, who was in civilian dress, raised his brown bowler hat repeatedly in response, while the Queen (wearing cornflower blue) and Princess Mary (in a white coat and skirt with a toque in blue) smiled their acknowledgments with obvious pleasure. No spectators in the vast throng watched the ladies' match with keener zest or closer attention. During its tense stages, when the issue hung on a single stroke, the King and the Princess by his side did not attempt to conceal their excitement. His Majesty, who had removed his hat, leaned eagerly forward in his seat, applauding heartily at the end of every long rally—impartially it goes without saying. That he enjoyed the experience and was amazed at the skill and endurance of both ladies was evident not only by what he said afterwards, but by his exclamations during the contest. When they left, after a stay of over an hour and a half, the King, Queen, and the Princess—escorted to their motor by Mr. H. Wilson Fox, M.P. (president of the club) and Commander Hillyard—were given another popular reception. I may add that at the conclusion of the match His Majesty expressed a desire to congratulate both the winner and the loser on their splendid and courageous fight. A message was sent to the dressing-room to which the exhausted rivals had repaired, but it was understood neither was then in a condi-

tion to reappear—and after what both had gone through, one was not in the least surprised.

#### THE OPENING SET

And now to the match itself! The technical conditions were about as good as they could be—no wind, the sun veiled by cloud, the temperature normal. It was a day for scientific accuracy and for exploiting the highest and most difficult arts of the game; and that is what we got—not for intermittent periods, as so often happens, and has happened frequently in this first post-war championship, but all through from the first ball to the last. Mlle. Lenglen opened the service and lost the first game to love. If she had expected shorter-length returns, hit with less speed and confidence—such as some of her opponents in former rounds had given her—she was instantly disillusioned, and the revelation probably shook her twenty-year-old mind a little. For this was Mrs. Chambers at her very best, a best that she had not shown before this season, a best that would obviously require extraordinary skill and morale to combat.

But Mlle. Lenglen's timidity was only momentary. As she went boldly and serenely, smiling the while, to 3-1, she seemed to be saying to herself, 'Here is pace that I enjoy. Here is beautiful length against which I have practised on the continent. Here is the greatest crowd to please.' In the fifth game she came up for the first time, and closed a long rally of hot-paced drives with a fine smash. It was observed that Mrs. Chambers, true to the best theory which seeks to blunt the chief weapon by continuous pressure, was mainly attacking her forehand, while Mlle. Lenglen, always scenting a volleying coup, was playing at her opponent's less forceful wing. The French girl had need be aware of the holder's forehand cross drive! Mainly by using this stroke, obliquely

to the far line, Mrs. Chambers reduced a 4-1 lead to 4-3. Indeed, she won the seventh game to love, all by fine service returns of this description. But her opponent, coming up now with more circumspection—her prevailing blemish throughout the match was to underestimate Mrs. Chambers' passing skill—increased the lead to 5-3.

#### THE GREAT MORAL TEST

Here followed the first solving of critical situations, which, exhibited by both players in turn, made the struggle so intensely fascinating, so speculative, and, morally, so supreme a test. Two exquisitely-judged drop shots, unretrievable even by a girl with a man's length of stride, saved the set for Mrs. Chambers, and after a tenth game of stubborn length she drew level at 5-5 with a lob which even Patterson could not have smashed. Instinctively understanding that they were now to see a level match fought out to the finish by superlative play, the crowd cheered vociferously. The many who had backed Mlle. Lenglen to win in two sets were obviously uncomfortable; the few (and I ventured to express this view in last Thursday's *Daily Telegraph*) who realised the unique strategic powers and driving vigour of Mrs. Chambers saw their expectation of a close match justified. And now, for the first time, Mlle. Lenglen seemed doubtful about the wisest tactics. That she came up on a weak second service in the eleventh game and lost the game thereby was evidence of her indecision. She was passed easily, and Mrs. Chambers led 6-5. Long and remarkably confident rests (no male competitors in the Championship placed so shrewdly) characterised the twelfth game. At last Mrs. Chambers got to within an ace of the set; the coolest person on the ground was Mlle. Lenglen. Twice the French girl, taking attacking risks, saved the game. Each was making shots which in any other match but this must

have scored; the retrieving was really wonderful. But Mlle. Lenglen held an advantage in service. She sometimes won clean aces with it; Mrs. Chambers rarely did. Two fine deliveries placed the French girl ahead at 7-6. Her confidence was irresistible, but she exchanged a word with her mother in the stand in the next game, and the diversion was momentarily fatal—the holder won the game to love. Mlle. Lenglen went to 8-7 with a love game—on her own account; again her service was useful as a striking force. Mrs. Chambers was always ready with a counter-effort, but in the eighteenth game the end came. A delightful incident, typical of the French girl's gaiety, marked this crisis. Mrs. Chambers had served a ball in the corner, which beat Mlle. Lenglen outright. A portion of the crowd disagreed with the linesman's verdict; they shouted 'fault.' When she tripped over to their side, Mlle. Lenglen brought these unruly critics to instant silence by a gesture of disapproval and an announcement that the service was quite good. A moment later she won the set at 10-8 with a perfect drop volley.

Would the fierce pace of the protracted first set find its reflex in the second? Mrs. Chambers quickly solved the problem by hitting just as hard and resolutely, her fine aim unimpaired. Mlle. Lenglen at first did not respond. She was hitting as hard, but she made unsound excursions to the net, and when there her volleying was less sure. She also began to serve double faults. Mrs. Chambers went to 4-1. Little Suzanne was obviously in distress for the first time, and she showed it by signalling to her distracted parents. Presumably they had the remedy at hand, for a tiny bottle was thrown on to the court. I was told afterwards it contained sugar. Whatever the stimulant, its effect was quickly beneficial. Mlle. Lenglen was soon volleying again with supreme confidence; she made a splendid bid for the squared set, and after a prodigious eighth game reached it at 4-4. But Mrs. Chambers

was not to be denied the fruits of her consistently sound baseline campaign, of which her back-hand recoveries were the feature. She went out, to great cheering, at 6-4. One set all.

Level in score though the players now were, the odds seemed to favour the English defender. She appeared to be less distressed physically than her opponent—Mlle. Lenglen had to send for brandy at the interval, and she asked a linesman to vacate his seat so that she might rest for a period rather beyond the normal—and the champion's game was so well under control and so free from lapse that English hopes were raised. These were dashed, however, when the challenger, drawing fresh vitality from some hidden springs, went to 4-1 in the final set. She had been a little lucky—a net-cord in the fourth and a double-fault in the fifth game—but the vigour and resourcefulness of her play were undeniable. Most of the games had gone to deuce. The sixth game, however, Mrs. Chambers won to love, her service gaining an unexpected speed. A spectator called out in the seventh game, Mlle. Lenglen sacrificed a critical point, and 4-3 was called. Fine passing shots, pulled out on the run, brought the champion to 4-4; there was still nothing in the match. A love game to Mrs. Chambers against her opponent's service looked to be a winning lead; the challenger, nothing daunted, replied with a love game. Five all!

The crowd were now worked up to a pitch of the tensest excitement, and the umpire had to call for silence during the rallies. You could almost have heard a pin drop on the turf while the ball was speeding backwards and forwards during the next rally, while 10,000 pairs of eyes were glued on the players. A long deuce game, and Mlle. Lenglen drove out; 6-5 to Mrs. Chambers. She went to 40-15 in the next game—twice within an ace of the match. It seemed morally certain she would be receiving the congratulations of her friends a moment later. Lenglen had come

to the net on a deep drive; the champion's return from a cross-volley appeared to be going out of reach. The French racket went out desperately, the ball hit the wood and went over—a lucky, misshapen stop volley. Another gruelling rally, won by the French girl, brought her to deuce; once more they were level. From that dread moment she moved forward steadily to victory. She was 7-6 from 15 and 8-7 from a service now inspired. The sixteenth game she took to love and the long tension was over. The scores were 10-8, 4-6, 9-7.

As soon as she was sure of her championship, won under such desperate conditions, Mlle. Lenglen swept off her soft white hat and rushed forward, with streaming locks, to shake hands with her opponent. It was her great moment of triumph, and she may be pardoned exultation. Kissed on the court by one of her countrymen, she was overwhelmed by her parents when she emerged, pressed on all sides, through the corridor. I have witnessed M. Lenglen's devotion for several years—it is sometimes embarrassing to tournament executives—but his joy on this occasion was ecstatic. The deliverance of France's lost provinces did not produce stronger emotion than the deliverance of Suzanne from what looked like certain defeat. I heard nothing but praise of Mrs. Chambers' splendid and heroic defence. On the whole, I think she had a little the worst of the luck; but on a day when both ladies were so obviously at the top of their form, luck must come in somewhere.

## TOM RICHARDSON

BY NEVILLE CARDUS

From the *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 31st, 1921

*With cricket, music is Mr. Neville Cardus's principal interest. The standard of the Manchester Guardian, on the staff of which he has gained renown, is notably high, and Mr. Neville Cardus's articles are not the least of its distinctions.*

ON June 26, 1902, Old Trafford was a place of Ethiopic heat, and the crowd that sat there in an airless world saw J. T. Tyldesley flog the Surrey bowlers all over the field. Richardson attacked from the Stretford end, and at every over's finish he wiped the sweat from his brow and felt his heart beating hammer strokes. Richardson had all his fieldsmen on the off side, save one, who 'looked out' at mid on. And once (and once only) he bowled a long hop to Tyldesley, who swung on his heels and hooked the ball far into the on field. The Surrey fieldsmen at mid wicket saw something pass him, and with his eye hopelessly followed the direction of the hit. 'One boundary more or less don't count on a day like this,' it was possible to imagine the sweltering fellow telling himself. 'Besides, Johnny's plainly going to get 'em anyhow.' The ball slackened pace on the boundary's edge. Would it just roll home? The crowd tried to cheer it to the edge of the field. Then one was aware of heavy thuds on the earth. Some Surrey man, after all, had been fool enough to think a desperate spurt and a boundary saved worth while, blistering sun despite. Who on earth was the stout but misguided sportsman? Heaven be praised, it was Richardson himself. He had bowled the ball; he had been bowling balls, and his fastest, for nearly two hours. His

labours in the sun had made ill those who sat watching him. And here he was, pounding along the outfield, after a hit from his own bowling. The writer sat on the 'popular' side, under the score-board, as the ball got home a foot in advance of Richardson. The impetus of his run swept him over the edge of the grass, and to stop himself he put out his arms and grasped the iron rail. He laughed—the handsomest laugh in the world—and said 'Thank you' to somebody who threw the ball back to him. His face was wet, his breath scant. He was the picture of honest toil. With the ball in his hands again he trotted back to the wicket, and once more went through the travail of bowling at J. T. Tyldesley on a pitiless summer's day.

This was Tom Richardson all over—the cricketer whose heart was so big that even his large body hardly contained its heroic energy. And this hot June morning the crowd mused about a day that had dragged out an intolerable length six years earlier—in 1896—on which England had struggled bitterly with Australia at Old Trafford, and Tom Richardson had touched as sublime a heroism as ever cricketer knew. This Manchester Test Match of July, 1896, seems now to have been fought on so vast a scale that it might well be thought none but giants could have sustained the burden of it. Yet when Richardson's part in it is retold, he was a very colossus who made pigmies of the others—made even Ranji a pigmy, despite that he played the innings of his life.

Australia batted first and scored 412. England—with Grace, Ranji, Stoddart, Abel, Jackson, J. T. Brown, MacLaren, Lilley, and Briggs to look to for runs—were all out for 231, and the Australian captain sent us in again. And once more the English cracks were reduced to littleness—all save Ranji, who, in Giffen's term, 'conjured' an innings of 154 not out, out of the total of 305. Australia needed 125 for victory—a mere song on the wicket. Old Trafford gave itself up to the



doldrums as soon as Iredale and Trott had comfortably made a score or so without loss. Then it was that Richardson's face was seen to be grim—his customary happy smile gone. In Australia's first innings he had bowled 68 overs for seven wickets and 168 runs. Yet he was here again, bowling like a man just born to immortal energy. And four Australian wickets were down for 45 in an hour. If only England had given the Australians a few more runs, the crowd wished out of its heart—if only Richardson could keep up his pace for another hour. But, of course, no man could expect him to bowl in this superhuman vein for long. . . . Thus did the crowd sigh and regret. But Richardson's spirit *did* go on burning a dazzling flame. The afternoon moved slowly to the sunset—every hour an eternity. And Richardson *did* bowl and bowl and bowl, and his fury diminished not a jot. Other English bowlers faltered, but not Richardson. The fifth Australian wicket fell at 79, the sixth at 95, the seventh at 100. The Australians now wanted 25, with only three wickets in keeping, McKibbin and Jones—two rabbits—amongst them. 'Is it possible?' whispered the crowd. 'Can it be? Can we win . . . . after all? . . .' Why, look at Richardson and see: England must win. This man is going to suffer no frustration. He has bowled for two hours and a half, without a pause. He has bowled till Nature has pricked him with protesting pains in every nerve, in every muscle of his great frame. He has bowled till Nature can no longer make him aware that she is abused outrageously, for now he is a man in a trance, the body of him numbed and moving automatically to the only suggestion his consciousness can respond to—'England must win, must win, must win.' . . . With nine runs still to be got by Australia, Kelly gave a chance to Lilley at the wicket and Lilley let the ball drop to the earth. The heart of Richardson might have burst at this, but it did not. To the end he strove and suffered.

Australia won by three wickets, and the players ran from the field—all of them save Richardson. He stood at the bowling crease, dazed. *Could* the match have been lost? his spirit protested. Could it be that the gods had looked on and permitted so much painful striving to go by unrewarded? His body still shook from the violent motion. He stood there like some fine animal baffled at the uselessness of great strength and effort in this world. . . . A companion led him to the pavilion, and there he fell wearily to a seat. That afternoon Richardson had laboured for three mortal hours without surcease. In the match he bowled 110 overs and three balls, for 13 wickets and 244 runs. He never bowled again in a Test Match at Manchester.

This man Richardson was the greatest cricketer that ever took to fast bowling. Lockwood had nicer technical shades than Richardson—a guile which was alien to the honest heart of Richardson. But Lockwood had not a great spirit. He was a bowler at the mercy of a mood; an artist with an artist's capriciousness. Richardson bowled from a natural impulse to bowl, and whether he bowled well or ill that impulse was always strong. His action moved one like music because it was so rhythmical. He ran to the wicket a long distance, and at the bowling crease his terminating leap made you catch breath. His break-back most cricketers of his day counted among the seven wonders of the game. He could pitch a ball outside the wicket on the hardest turf and hit the leg stump. The break was, of course, an action break; at the moment of 'release' his fingers swept across the ball and the body was flung towards the left. And his length was as true as Attewell's own. But who is going to talk of Richardson's art in terms of the 'filthily technical,' as Mr. Kipling would call it? His bowling was wonderful because into it went the very life-force of the man—the triumphant energy that made him in his heyday seem one of Nature's announcements of the joy of life.

It was sad to see Richardson grow old, to see the fires in him burn low. Cricketers like Richardson would not know old age in the 'Never Never Land' of our desires. Every spring-time ought to find them newborn, like the green world they live in.

# NATURE



## BIRDS IN FLIGHT

By ANTHONY COLLETT

From *The Times*, March 21st, 1929

*The late Anthony Collett died on his 52nd birthday, 1929. For ten years previously he had been a member of the staff of The Times, writing on country life, and more than all on the birds he so well loved and understood. No one knew the small heart of a bird better than he. A friend said at his death: 'His monastic head with its large glowing eyes took on more and more the appearance of a nobly contemplative hawk.' He takes a high place in English literature as a writer on birds and beasts, a place in that line of exponents of the English countryside which began with another Oriel man—Gilbert White of Selborne. He was a field naturalist of the first rank.*

UNDER the open skies of March the flight of birds appeals with a more varied intensity to both ear and eye. There is a majesty in the very sound of their beaten wings when some vast flock of starlings, not yet dissolved after the cold weather, moves with a roar literally as loud as the first growling of a thunder-peal from the fringe of a Berkshire wood. Few ears in Britain hear the music that throbs from the wings of the wild swan in flight, yet there is almost as keen a thrill when our half-wild mute swans, restless with spring's instinct of wandering, mount with long white necks outstretched, and sonorous rhythm, over the shining loops of Arun or the miniature protected shoreline that lies behind the great barrier of the Chesil Beach.

Flight is combined with song by certain birds into a complicated expression of spring rapture. March multiplies the singing skylarks fivefold; all day long, in fair weather, their

innumerable intermingling ditties drop like May rain on the contented ear. The skylark's song-flight seldom outlasts three minutes; if we think we hear it longer, probably we have confused one bird's song with another's, or else the singer is a woodlark. The woodlark's song-flight is astonishing in continuity, as in sweetness; yet those long rambles about the sky, and tender repeated phrases, never attain the concentrated intensity of the skylark's steep spiral and unbroken song. Before the tree pipet adds its jet of flight and music to the tree-tops, the smaller meadow pipet, which winters with us, rehearses its weaker ascent and song. When March skies turn grey and cold with drizzling rain, and spring seems actually receding, no sight and sound are more characteristic of those days of nature's patience than the little speckled titlark flinging itself into the wet wind above a furze common and forcing out its thin but lively strain.

In cold years the spring aerial flourish of the lapwing is often delayed until March is waning. It is natural to speak of the peewit as we listen, and of the lapwing as we watch; for the cock green plover unites in his overflow of high spirits over his chosen nesting-place an intensification of his habitual double cry and broad-winged flagging flight. He buffets the air in a rapture; the sound of his throbbing vanes is as jubilant as his cry. The peewit's song-flight is a kind of glorification of the airy loops with which, devoid of music, the more placid woodpigeon has tossed since January from garden tree to tree. Like the drumming flight of the snipe, it does not seem a means of courtship though it is performed in presence of the hen. It has been watched, in undeveloped form, even before the bird, seized with the impulse, had left its winter flock, and it seems essentially an expression of spring vitality.

Spring goads all these birds to a sublimation of flight and attendant song; yet there is almost as great a pleasure in watching the daily feats of some of the greatest flyers. Sheer speed

delights us in the rush of the screaming swift by the hot wall, the stoop of the peregrine, 'like a thunderbolt,' down the gap in the cliff-front, or even the dart with which the sparrow-hawk flurries the flock of finches. Still more striking are the modes of defying gravity by gently adjusted effort. Masters of buoyant flight, such as the soaring hawks and the seagulls, seem able to humour every puff and flow of the air, and to become rulers of it by an exquisite adaptation. Where the wind rises vertically or almost vertically, as it often does along a cliff-top, or over a row of seaside houses, it is easy for the herring gull or black-headed gull to hang suspended, or rise on an easy path. The gull gives a more striking display of skill when it slants its path against a stiff and gusty breeze among all the currents of air that contend among the outstanding rocks of the Atlantic coastline. Almost its only effort is to adjust the planes of its flight-feathers and tail to the wind which lends it motive power, or, now and then, slightly to close or widen its wrist-joints. A gull will thus cross half the bay with a single wing-beat. In calmer weather the circles of the soaring buzzard reveal a different adaptation. Momentum is accumulated by the passage down the wind; then the bird turns and completes its stately circle on a rising path. The kestrel hovering at a fixed point, head to wind, is a familiar country spectacle; less often seen is the perfection of this static pose, in which, for a few seconds, the bird hangs actually motionless, except for almost imperceptible twitching adjustments of the flight-feathers and stronger movements of the tail. Kestrels humour the wind for their hunting, but the raven tumbles and turns in its buoyant medium in sheer play. Like gulls, he utilises the upward current at the cliff's edge, but this is a zest, not a necessity; alone, as well as with a mate, he inverts himself, falls seaward, and flicks over again, with his open beak uttering quiet notes of pleasure.

The self-control of birds on the wing is never more sur-



prisingly shown than when they give the freest play to gravity. That spinning fall of hundreds—even thousands—of swallows to their autumn roost is more astonishing than their precisest feats of flight; and it is rivalled by roosting starlings. The larger the bird, the more impressive is the menace of disaster; and once, but only once, we remember to have seen a flight thus ended by the broad-winged heron. Flying at dusk over a wooded Thames-side cliff, it saw other herons beneath it in the meadows. Slanting downwards, and checking its speed by crooking inward its wing-tips, it suddenly plunged headlong, with its great wings veering and spinning like a stricken aeroplane's. The next moment it was resting motionless in the meadow.

## IN BLUEBELL LAND

BY TICKNER EDWARDES

From the *Daily Chronicle*, April, 1921

*Sussex is proud of Tickner Edwardes, the famous Bee-Master, who has so truly and happily interpreted the spirit of the county in essay and book. He was born in 1865. Besides many works on bee-keeping (notably The Bee-Master of Warrilow and The Lore of the Honey Bee), he is the author of Sidelights of Nature, An Idler in the Wilds, A Country Calendar (1928) and many novels of Sussex village-life. In addition to his titles 'author and priest,' he is 'Captain (retired) R.A.M.C.': his experience with that Corps he related in With the R.A.M.C. in Egypt. He is Vicar of Burpham, Arundel.*

COMING from the open heath, with its flood of song and sunshine, into the dimness and quiet of the bluebell wood, is like passing into the shadowy precincts of a cathedral aisle.

Out on the heath the April sun beats down upon a wilderness of yellow gorse and snowy blackthorn, and fresh young grass of a greenness beyond all belief—*islands and promontories of shining gold and silver set in an emerald sea*. But here in the wood scarce a beam can penetrate the thick vault of mingled larch and beech and pine. The sombre canopy, and the crowding grey stems beneath, soften the noonday glare into a twilight that at first seems chilly, almost eerie, in its secret soberness. You have left all the resounding chorus of the heath-loving birds behind. A sudden hush has fallen about you, as though great cathedral doors had been swiftly, noiselessly closed in your rear the moment you entered the wood.

Ever in such a solitude and shady temperate quiet, the true bluebells come with each year to their fullness of beauty, and you cannot really know bluebells until you seek them in such a place. Holiday folk who go only to the sun-swept woodland clearings for this shiest and wildest of wild-flowers, never behold one tithe of their true loveliness.

They spend an hour in the midst of a vivid incandescence of cold colour, carry back to their suburb an armful of ragged vegetation, and think they have imported true bluebell sweetness into the dust of the town. But the bluebells of the open clearings, or even of the thin, light-ridden wayside woods, have nothing of the true bluebell sweetness and mystery about them. Sunshine is no more a friend to them than it is to the elfin loveliness of hoar-frost. As the lusty breath of it dispels the frail delicacy of the one, so it dissipates the staid, pure subtilty of the other.

And bluebells cannot be gathered any more than you can gather iridescent ocean-foam. Their charm is inseparable from their environment. A bunch of bluebells in a table vase is of all things the most pathetic and pitiable. You have brought but a botch of fussy, staring colour from the woodland deeps: the spirit of the flowers has evaded you. They are no more

bluebells—this wodge of smalt frippery that you hold in your hand—than is the douse of wet brine on your fingers the living, trembling, rainbow foam-flowers of the sea.

There are not many real bluebell woods, even in southern England, the bluebell's authentic home. To come to their true perfection, the flowers need a location of age-long neglect and oblivion, just a tangle of wild forest growth untouched and forgotten for generations, such as you have chanced upon to-day.

And even so, you must go deep into the grey quiet heart of the wood before you are in the true Bluebell Land. The broad forest-road that tunnels straight ahead flanked by giant beech-trees, has only a sparse fringe of cobalt to its brown, leaf-strewn way. But stop where you will now, and in any direction under the soaring roof-top of verdure, you may look upon a sight that will glow in the memory to your dying day.

Though the wood is so dense and dark above, and such a sober twilight broods around you, it is wonderful how far and how clearly you can see between the crowding stems. And wherever you turn your eyes now, they rest upon nothing but a floor of living azure; one unbroken level of softly luminous colour broadening out on all sides between the trees; vista beyond vista of softly radiant light, as of a sea of molten amethyst, flowing away into the dim distance, and ever darkling until you cannot tell whether you are looking upon the blue of bluebells, or only the sulky indigo of imprisoned air blocking the farthestmost woodland deeps.

This is the true Bluebell Land, and it is worth tramping many a weary mile to see. But to-day you have come upon it in only one of its many phases. On dead-calm April mornings such as this, the bluebell wood is in its soberest and staidest, perhaps its most mystic, mood. You can wander by the hour together and hear not a sound but the stealthy scamper of a squirrel far up in the dim labyrinth of tree-tops, and see not a

bell move of all the myriads around you, save when its lip is pulled down by a passing bee. But to-morrow the merry south wind may be drawing wisps of silver gossamer athwart the sky, and setting the whole woodland roof in a flutter of singing.

It will be a mighty wind indeed that can break through that barrier and ruffle the calm ocean of slumbering blue beneath: here in the inmost secret heart of the wood not a breath stirs, perhaps, for weeks together. Nevertheless, windy days bring to the most sheltered reaches in Bluebell Land an illusion of stirring life such as words are powerless to depict.

As you stand in the midst of the hushed, incense-burdened solitude, looking away down one of its fairest aisles, your ears are full of the surging song of the wind in the tree-tops, but no other sound nor sign reaches you of the rollicking tumult that you left on the heath. Yet now and again the wind cleaves the dense forest canopy above and lets a single sunbeam through. Slowly the ray travels like a ship's searchlight across the field of view. And then it ceases to be mere sunshine. Now it is a hovering, bright-vaned spirit—a living thing, the collective, corporate entity of all the bluebells that ever shone in this forgotten Eden—moving over the face of the deep.

## PARADISE REVISITED

BY SIR WILLIAM BEACH THOMAS

From *The Observer*, Sept. 21st, 1930

*Sir William Beach Thomas was war correspondent to the Daily Mail during the greater part of the Great War. And since the war, he has become one of the best known, as he is certainly one of the most talented of nature writers. Incidentally, he is a considerable athlete, and in his University days was President of the Oxford University Athletic Club.*

THE parish is not more than sixty miles from London, but it is a retreat that any anchorite might welcome. Electric wires and smoother roads may now pass across it, but what was the deep country is now the deep, deep country. Its remoteness is reduplicated. Mechanical progress has bridged the seven miles that separates it from a railway station, but not affected the isolation except to increase it. The thirteenth-century tower of the splendid church always recalled the most pictorial line in the too intellectual Milton. Its square tower was always:

Bosomed high in tufted trees.

The one difference is that to-day the battlements scarcely emerge from the elm domes; and you may take their half disappearance as symbol of the reconquest of the place by Nature. This Eden, for the place is very lovely, is dated after the Fall. The high-pitched thatched roofs are fewer; a narrower string of children break loose from the little school; the hedges spread further into the fields and enclose a sparser cultivation; the ditches are blinder; you might believe that the fewer labourers move with a slower tread, as if a deeper clay as well as a heavier tale of years clung to their feet.

In old days a keeper's lodge stood on the slope of the clayey

hillside, where you discover the best view of the church. It was inhabited by a stalwart (incidentally his name—I record a true fact—was Adam), who proudly showed visitors a deep dint in the lined hat that had saved his head from a militant poacher. He kept at the back of his house a particular section of rail and hedge as his keeper's 'larder.' It was hung with the skeletons and mouldering bodies of stoat and weasel, of magpie and jay, of crows, owls, and hawks, in season. As a natural historian he was not commendable; and even a sportsman may be allowed to discover a certain satire in the title of his profession; for half the 'keeper's' business—or so some think—is killing. If there were pheasants in the wood and abundant partridges on the stubbles, old Adam was content and felt a conscious pleasure in duty done. What would he think if he revisited his Eden after the fall?

'The Grove,' which was his one pheasant covert (though he was complimented by the Fitzwilliam hunt itself on his respect for the foxes), is now, as an 'engrooved sportsman' complained, a reserve for magpies. You cannot approach wood or spinney throughout the parish without hearing the bird's rather Mephistophelian, but not unpleasant, chatter, a little suggestive of a cock blackbird's evening gabble. The slow buoyant flight of the bird, as obviously using his eyes as any observation-balloonist over the battle-field, is among the commonest spectacles. The bullfinch hedges, as well as the wood and hedgerow trees, hold as conspicuous nests as the village rookery itself. The bird, indeed, seems to have grown a prouder architect. Members of a rare shooting party were called to study a particular nest in a single ash-tree. 'Never did I see a nest of such proportions' was the popular verdict. On the base of a nest as big as any other crow's stood a thorny hood of a wholly needless magnitude. It is possibly known in the neighbourhood as 'Madam's Folly,' for the superstitious custom still prevails of lifting your hat to a magpie with the password, 'good morning, madam.' The chatter of the mag-

pies is punctuated by the harsh scream of the seemingly wickeder but less destructive jay. One walk by the bigger spinney to the accompaniment of such notes would have given old Adam a nightmare of harpies.

It seemed to me that the partridges, though not in this congenial year greatly fewer than of old, had changed their habits. They were once a byword for wildness, for the county was short of cover. To-day there are fields where you must continually dodge thorn and briar (the words are used with botanical accuracy). Rough grasses, with apologies for the word, abound. Some of them are covered with creeping bramble fifteen or twenty yards from the hedge. Some are white with the mixed seed of poisonous ragwort and bitter hawkweed. The partridges have learned furtiveness from the opportunity of concealment. You might now and again walk through the very midst of a covey and not know it, till you heard the whirr of wings a hundred yards behind you. Perhaps they have learnt new tricks from the red-legged French partridges which are numerous. They ran and crouched so cunningly that you might not suspect their presence at all. Indeed, not one was shot by the walkers. It was only when they were driven that their numbers were discovered. Then their straight, low, even flight, most different from the lively curl and swing of the English bird, left them easy victims. Is the belief, I wonder, as true as it is common, that this powerful bird with the red beak and bold marking of the breast feathers is an undesirable alien because hostile to the English bird? It has perhaps a more decided view about rights of territory in nesting time, but that perhaps is the whole trouble.

It is September, and the partridges, with their enemies, have had more than their share of the natural history of a prairie land. Changes among the mammals, and perhaps even the insects, are too large a theme for a postscript, as the old 'keeper' would certainly grant.

ART





## VINCENT VAN GOGH

By P. G. KONODY

From *The Observer*, Jan. 21st, 1923

*P. G. Konody, the art critic of The Observer and the Daily Mail, was born in Budapest and educated in Vienna. But he has lived in London since he was seventeen. His knowledge is encyclopaedic, his sympathy is wide. As a man, he is eager for friendship, and very ready to give it with both hands.*

'I WAS ready to love anyone and everyone. Isn't it odd that no one of the many whom I have met liked me?' The whole tragedy of that great, lonely artist's life is summed-up in this death-bed utterance of Van Gogh's aching soul. In a way Van Gogh himself may be held to be the author, or at least the part-author, of Meier-Graefe's remarkable biographical study, published a year or two ago in Germany, and now made available to the English reader in Mr. John Holroyd Reece's equally remarkable translation. For Van Gogh's own letters to his brother Theo are the main source from which Meier-Graefe derived the material for his study—the letters and the master's paintings and drawings upon which the author seems, in a subtle way, to have based his own style.

There is something akin to the hatchet-strokes of Van Gogh's brush in this description of his activity at Arles during the period of inspired creation which preceded the final breakdown: 'As he could only produce prose, he had to penetrate more deeply than anyone else had done before him. His eyes bit into every object, into trees and soil, like an axe. He kneaded the ephemeral air into a solid mass to create an equivalent to the magic. As everything was yellow, he had to paint

yellow, but so that you could taste, hear, smell and touch it. He painted till he made the stones talk.' The tenseness and concentrated expressiveness of this and many kindred passages create the atmosphere needed for the understanding of the life and art of Van Gogh, who himself in his letters frequently cast his language in a similar mould: so much so that the reader is at times in doubt as to whether Meier-Graefe is giving of his own or quoting from the letters.

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But it is Van Gogh's tragic life rather than his turbulent, disturbing art, that forms the subject of this study. For Van Gogh life and art meant the same, but the distinction must be drawn to emphasise the fact that Meier-Graefe's book is a biography and a psychological study, and not an essay in art criticism. Van Gogh's misfortune was his physical and spiritual uncouthness. He was predestined for martyrdom. His whole life was spent in the pursuit of unattainable ideals—ideals of art, of love, of an improved humanity. His coarse appearance and bluntness of speech repelled those whom he sought to attract; his lack of real talent and heaviness of hand proved a severe handicap in his profession until towards the end of his life he evolved a style of uncanny vitality from this very heaviness. He was so cursed with poverty that he scarcely knew the meaning of a square meal. He lived on bread and potatoes; and when he had the choice between using the small allowance made to him by his devoted brother Theo for buying paints and canvases or obtaining the scantiest rations of food, he preferred to go hungry and continue his art work. He never knew success. Towards the end, one of his pictures was sold at a Brussels exhibition for 500 francs. It was a unique event in his career. On three distinct occasions, he thought he had found the woman who could have brought light into his gloomy life. In each case his affection was spurned, and he married, from compassion, a street woman of

coarse fibre and bad health, with whom, with the best of will, he found it impossible to live after a while.

\* \* \* \* \*

Van Gogh began at the age of sixteen as an art-dealer's assistant. His leaning towards art, hampered by lack of the creative faculty, drove him irresistibly in this direction. But his gruffness of speech and lack of polish made success impossible. He became a teacher of languages in London, and—impelled by his profound faith, and feeling the call for the Church, his father's profession—assistant-preacher in a Methodist school at Isleworth. He returned to the Continent and attended a seminary at Brussels to prepare for ordination, but resented the waste of time on the study of dead languages. His yearning was for immediate activity. To spread the Gospel among the wretched, half-starved miners, and to help them by word and deed, he, half-starved and penniless himself, went as a lay preacher on probation to the dreary Borinage district. The whole warmth of his sympathy went to these joyless outcasts. He preached to them, he gave them all he had to give—his food, his very bed. And in a way this strange man felt happy among all this misery. But he resented the routine imposed upon him by his superiors, and was promptly recalled. His church career was ended, and he turned to art. He was twenty-seven years of age, when he began with clumsy fingers to draw the featureless landscape of the Borinage and the life of its people.

\* \* \* \* \*

From that moment drawing, and, later, painting, became with him a passion, an obsession. With all his tremendous determination to master his craft, which spurred him on wherever he pitched his tent: at the paternal vicarage, in Amsterdam, the Hague, Brussels, Paris, Arles, and finally the asylums of Saint Rémy and Auvers: he never acquired ease and slickness. But his passion made him wrench the very in-

most soul out of every subject upon which it fixed. He found a soul in the inanimate—in a dish of potatoes, in a cane chair, in an earthenware bowl—and his pictures and drawings brought this soul to the surface, investing the object with an uncanny life and exposing its essential character. 'Van Gogh's pictures do not constitute his distinction,' says Meier-Graefe; 'the creations of other painters have been greater and more profound, but it lies in the manifest mystery of his vision, perceived by Vincent as through translucent crystal.'

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The warm sun and luxuriant nature of Arles brought Vincent's art to fruition. At Arles, intoxicated by the glories of the South, and conscious of having come within measurable distance of what he had been striving for throughout his artist's life, he enjoyed a few weeks of comparative happiness. It was the lull before the storm. At his urging his friend Gauguin, great artist, man of the world, and ruthless scoffer, joined him in his retreat. Van Gogh treated his friend with the deference due to a master, but Gauguin's sarcasm and derisive laughter drove him to frenzy. He came near taking his friend's life, and in a fit of remorse—a first attack of the madness which held him intermittently to the very end—in response to a jocular request made to him by a loose woman, he cut off one of his ears and sent it to her in a parcel as a Christmas present. Gauguin left him to his fate, and Van Gogh, a madman only at rare intervals, decided voluntarily and deliberately, in one of his spells of sanity, to enter a lunatic asylum. His life among the demented, he alone fully conscious of his condition, and in constant fear of a relapse, is the saddest chapter of the Van Gogh tragedy. It ends in suicide, and, clumsy to the very end, Van Gogh discharged his revolver into his stomach.

## HUMOUR



## HAIL AND FAREWELL

By D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS

From the *Daily Mail*

*Wyndham Lewis was Beachcomber the first, a fellow of original and fantastic humour, a considerable scholar, the pleasantest of friends. Day after day, Wyndham Lewis produced his thousand words of humour for the Express until, indeed, he felt that this daily task could not be continued without loss of power and spontaneity. Luckily he was able to arrange to write less and to earn more.*

AN old worldly man lay propped up among his pillows in a high antique four-poster bed. His features were handsome and aquiline, his white hair still thick. His eyes were full of experience and irony. He lay there, very near his end, contemplating with faint amusement the preoccupation and solicitude of his attendants, most of whom he had disliked very heartily for many years.

An air of decent expectancy hung about the bedchamber. The westering sun laid long shafts of dusty gold through the open casement and across the floor, which was of polished oak. On a small table by the bed stood a bowl full of flowers, a wax candle in a silver candlestick, and a slim calf-bound volume written by a seventeenth-century nobleman. The leaves of this volume were yellowed with age and use.

They begged this old man for a final message. He said in a clear but feeble voice:

‘Never order thick soup. Never read books recommended by rich women. Never call a hound a dog. Never wear spats with brown shoes. Never live in Surrey.

‘Never drink champagne if you can get wine. Never be in



possession of small change when sharing a cab with a wealthy man. Never run short of cigarettes or disillusion. Never forget that of the four classes of persons in modern England who wear elaborate wigs—actors, judges, rich women, and clowns—none is amusing in private life.

‘Never forget that all literary persons, even when the sex is distinguishable, are death. Never be rude to a money-lender, who may be in the Peerage next week. Never explain.

‘Never jest with financiers, lawyers, the very simple, or fools. Never wear a bowler hat. Never say “on” a boat. Never lose your poise, your latchkey, your memory, your ability to forget, and your sense of proportion. Never buy founders’ shares.’

The old worldly man paused, and contemplated the setting sun with what the French call *un fin sourire*. He then resumed:

‘Never over-tip the flunkies of the rich. Never hazard a light observation in the presence of the Scots. Never refer to realities in the presence of the English. Never refer to bribes in the presence of a Politician, to the Creed in the presence of a Society Dean, to the old-clothes business in the presence of a financial Peer, to warfare in the presence of a Soldier with more than one long row of variegated ribbons.

‘Never be astonished except at being astonished. Never forget that on the whole it is more dangerous to do good to one’s fellow-men than to do harm. Never forget that if a fact is not printed on good, thick, expensive paper in clear, solid type the English will not believe it. Never drink cocktails.

‘Never forget that one is never as happy, or unhappy, as one thinks one is. Never insult the Faculty by dying without the aid of a doctor. Never collect press-cuttings. Never contradict the babble of rich women. Never omit titles of courtesy, such as “Mr.” Never eat to music.’

Here the nurse, a stoutly-built and wilfully bright person of

uncertain age, bustled in with a medicine-bottle and a teaspoon. On learning that the nostrum was for him the old man shrugged a little, but submitted. At the news that a Mr. Gapworthy had called that afternoon and proposed returning, a shade of acute annoyance crossed the old man's high-domed forehead—for he thought the servant said 'Galsworthy,' and was for a moment under the impression that the well-known novelist and humanitarian, his great heart swelling as ever with noble pity, had called to indulge himself in a little compassion.

On discovering his mistake the old man took a deep breath and resumed in a stronger manner:

'Never relax an expression of grave and attentive approval in conversation with quacks, parasites, *cabotins* of Art and Letters, healers, and any form of charlatan, since but for these the money of rich women might be diverted to some terrible form of charity.

'Never collect stamps. Never forget to assure a woman that she is unlike any other woman in the world, which she will believe, after which you may proceed to deal with her as with any other woman in the world. Never forget that the correct lengthening of the "y" in "Pytchley" is more important than the Four Last Things. Never motor to Brighton. Never take a Pullman train to Brighton. Never go to Brighton.

'Never mention Hell to a Don. Never wear a pearl tiepin.

'Never forget that you may kick a blind beggar but not a lapdog, unless you want indignant Deans after you. Never speak of Death in the houses of the great. Never despise a reputation for wit, which may be made in London by eating mustard with cheese.

'Never, if about to compose any epigrammatic trifle for gain, omit to take advantage of the fact that no magazine editor has ever read the plays of Oscar Wilde. Never forget,

when discussing anything in an authoritative company, that those present probably know even less about it, if possible, than you do.

'Never call one of the Great by his intimate name (such as "Puffles," "Tiny," or "The Crook") without having in your pocket a signed authorisation. Never forget that the following take themselves seriously: politicians, vegetarians, advanced thinkers, and gentlemen in the care of warders and male nurses.

'Never forget that fat men, for all their fair rounded exterior, are often cunning and malignant like the rest. Never take the trouble to master the fashionable artistic or pseudo-scientific jargon of the moment, since you can make up just as good yourself. Never talk when you can listen. Never listen when you can read.

'Never read without meditation. Never accept the label on Soho wine, the eminent, and movements. Never accept the label on anything without examination. Never descend to complaint. Never eat any caviar but Beluga. Never——'

Here the old man, with a charming smile, begged his nurse to remove herself permanently and far, adding that no man of taste *in articulo mortis* could endure a female Joynson-Hicks buzzing and flapping round him perpetually. After this, folding his pale and finely-shaped hands, he relapsed into meditation and soon afterwards passed away without adding any more to his advice, which was drawn partly from his own experience of this world and partly from that of others; though he himself, indeed (as often happens), had never practised such wisdom, as it is called in this world, to any great extent.

He left £207 8s. 10d.

## OTHER PEOPLE'S CLUBS

BY HAROLD NICOLSON

From the *Evening Standard*, Sept. 6th, 1930

*Harold Nicolson is the son of an Ambassador, and has recently migrated from diplomacy to journalism and the B.B.C. I knew him in his diplomatic days. I have watched him, indeed, with admiration trying to teach colonial statesmen the intricacies of European politics. There was never any affected modesty about Nicolson, and ten years ago he had the same pleasant certainty about everything that he now shows in his wireless talks.*

THE delight of London during the holiday season, that sense of spaciousness and repose, is marred for me by one glaring and almost unutterable defect. For it is during that benign season that the clubs of London take down their pictures and have their annual wash. In August one's own club is invaded by strangers, and in September one becomes an alien and an intruder oneself.

It is not the August part that I dislike so poignantly. True it is that alien hats appear upon the pegs, that alien faces crowd, arrogant and defensive, into the coffee room. But there are compensations.

It is amusing to watch these ill-dressed gentlemen guzzling in rows. It is pleasant to hear again those funny stories which had reached one's own club in February or March. It is interesting to study a different breed of humanity, to watch the antics of another caste.

And then one has a sense of hospitality. One is being a host—vicarious, it is true, but still a host. It is with a courtly gesture, therefore, that one indicates to these strayed revellers the way to the cloakroom. It is with brisk friendliness that one apologises when they bump into one at the swing door. A

pleasant glow of patronage and power irradiates one's features. One feels possessive, proprietary, initiate. The milk of human kindness overflows.

No—it is the return visit which is so galling to the human soul. Always do I forget year in year out that the day will come inevitably when I shall spring from my taxi and be faced, not by the beaming and, indeed, comradely smile of my own club porter, but by the hoardings of some cleaner and decorator, by a little curt notice gummed upon a forbidding and forbidden door.

Crushed and rankling one returns to the taxi and speeds in apprehension to that other club which has offered the chill hospitality of its halls. There it stands—magnificent, sepulchral, huge.

With trembling but defiant knees one climbs the steps and enters that vast portal. A chill blast, such as blows out from the Pantheon, greets one's fevered cheek. In the outer hall crouches a familiar figure. It is the exiled under-porter of one's own beloved club. He sits there apologetically casting appealing eyes to those of his own members who totter by.

His presence gives no comfort: it adds merely to a growing dismay; for he, sitting there in front of his occasional table, sitting there so unwanted, so detached, so terribly provisional, does but emphasise that pariah feeling, does but brand one further with the mark of Cain.

With thumping heart you enter the inner hall. Minatory figures stalk between the double rows of pillars—those very figures which, but a week ago, had seemed so pathetic and so shabby when *you* were the initiate and *they* the pariah.

Magnificent and lowering, they stalk to-day, and as, in one's desire to find the cloakroom one enters first the Secretary's Office and then the lift, they smile sardonically, pitying the nervous folly of a lesser breed.

At last you find the cavernous arch which leads downstairs,

and as you descend the stairway your eyes light upon a familiar though repellent figure descending from an opposite flight. It is yourself: it is a mirror: there are few things so shattering to the nerves than the unknown mirrors in other people's clubs.

Down there in the tepidarium men are washing their hands and brushing their senatorial hair. How confident they seem, how intimate with each other, how triumphant! A race of demi-gods lording in majesty from this Olympus. One's back assumes the circle of a cringe.

And then one must brace oneself for luncheon. It is obvious from the strong smell of curry that the luncheon-room is off there to the left. Brisk and defiant, in one stalks. It is always embarrassing to enter a kitchen, but to break in upon the kitchen of another club is of all gestures the most ungainly. As one retreats the sound of scullions giggling accompanies one back to the central hall.

Through the glass panel of a doorway the sight of a napkin folded like a bishop's mitre points the way. It seems a small room at first, but as you penetrate beyond the entrance it unfolds itself into banqueting hall after banqueting hall.

You adopt the questing manner of those who are seeking for a welcoming and highly important friend. You scan those serried hostile tables hoping against hope that Mr. Bernard Shaw will rise as a benignant Jupiter and press you with adulatory movements to take the chair beside him; that Mr. Baldwin will call loudly to you, a cry of comradeship wreathing itself around your Christian name; that Lord Brentford will offer to share with you his barley water; that some Archbishop will rise and rush to you in greeting.

These things, in September, do not occur. Having failed, in spite of dignified though anxious scrutiny, to find your important friend you will collapse as a pricked bladder behind the nearest table.

The waiter, with scarce-concealed contempt, will ask your wishes. 'Lamb,' you will mutter in a voice too distant to be quite your own. 'Did you say ham, Sir,' the waiter will ask, exchanging a glance of merriment with the wine steward. 'Yes,' you will answer, lying but afraid.

And after you have had your ham you will, all careless, light a cigarette. 'No smoking in here' the steward will hiss into your ear. Hurriedly you will extinguish the cigarette and then glance up at the architecture of the ceiling, with an appraising air mingled with a touch of disapproval.

You pay your bill with a gesture at once authoritative and careless. There is nothing which restores self-confidence so rapidly as being in the position to pay one's bill. You enter the peristyle again jingling half-crowns in your defiant pockets. It is deserted. You make a dash for the doorway. You make a dash for the street. And then you have to creep back again to find your hat.

No—there are few things so humiliating as other people's clubs. We feel grateful to them for their hospitality. So grateful. So grateful. But, oh, that happy day when we shall return again to the haunts where we belong!

## ENGLAND: HER COUNTRY HOMES

### A WARNING TO AMERICAN VISITORS

By E. V. KNOX

From *Punch*, March 23rd, 1927

THE climate of England (outside the principal London hotels) has been called cold, and it is true that she abounds in place-names such as Cold Higham, Chillingly and Frostwick, where-

as no villages appear to bear contradictory names like Hot Aston, Warm Barnet and Boiling Sudbury. But if England is cold, she has fires on her hearths heaped high with coal and faggots cut from her immemorial trees: and it is only when the visitor has seen these fires replenished by a footman and rekindled by a housemaid carrying a pair of bellows and a couple of firelighters soaked in petrol that he begins to realise the homely simplicity of English life.

It is said that in England there is rain. But the advantages of rain are more conspicuous than its defects. To begin with, it renders the landscape of England green and its gardens beautiful (see my book on 'The Plantain of England, Its Cause and Cure'), whereas the landscapes of other countries are grey, purple, white, yellow, pink or brown, colours fatiguing to the optic nerve, and producing in the inhabitants hysteria, political revolution, and sometimes penury and despair. How many a traveller, wearied by hundreds of miles of waving corn, of burning desert or un pitying snow, tired of rose-coloured rocks and parched vegetation, has not rejoiced as his train puffed through England to behold so many acres under grass, turnips, potatoes, garages and golf? This green, alluded to favourably by most English poets (though not by Richard Gudge, who writes in the second line of *Simmerings*, 'Foul verdigris . . .'), is caused by England's rain, and endures throughout her spring and summer, until the rise of her autumnal mists, to emerge again as gloriously as ever in April at the end of her winter fog.

It has been pointed out that if there were higher mountains and more snow in England it would be easier to ski there, but it is equally true to say that if there were more grass and mangel-wurzels in Switzerland it would be a better place for feeding sheep. It is to the rainfall of England, moreover, that she owes perhaps the two most famous institutions of her country life—the barometer and the rain-gauge.



It is the ambition of every Englishman toiling in the smoke of her manufacturing cities to retire at last to the country and have a barometer and rain-gauge of his own. They are the household gods, to which an elaborate ritual is due. Each member of the family, on coming down to breakfast, taps the barometer long and hard in the hope of altering the English weather and making it a little more dry: and each, on passing to the sideboard, where the porridge, buttered eggs, kidneys, bacon, etc., repose, looks out of the window, comments on the wind and the condition of the sky, and announces the result of his or her tappings for the benefit of the rest. And this although considerable State organisation exists for the purpose of tapping barometers and communicating the results to the daily Press.

The present writer well remembers paying a visit to a country house during a period when the barometer happened to be passing from CHANGE to FAIR. Host, hostess, sons, daughters, guests, all tapped the instrument one after the other in turn before entering the breakfast-room, and announced joyfully, 'The barometer's going up!' until at last the youngest son came down and struck it more violently than ever. The fastening by this time had grown somewhat loose, and there was a loud crash in the hall. Alas! the barometer had gone down.

The worship of the rain-gauge follows a different procedure. In dealing with the rain-gauge it is the tradition in England not to desire less rain, but more, in the hope of establishing a local or even a personal record; and keen indeed is the competition amongst neighbours as to who shall have the largest decimal to report, after the morning visit has been paid to the lawn. The rock garden, the herbaceous border, the bird bath and bird table all claim their share of attention, but the undercurrent of excitement noticeable in every member of the party is due to the possibility of defeating the rain-gauge next

door. Sometimes a field-mouse will have crept into the rain-gauge and committed suicide there, causing the utmost anxiety and alarm.

The climate forms the chief subject of discussion in the English home, but visitors are also expected to have a passing acquaintance with the following themes:

Illnesses.

Flowers.

Golf.

Carburettors.

The psychology of dogs.

The form of horses.

The habits of birds.

The politics, art, religion and morals of England are not discussed at the table, and the same prohibition in the main applies to her manufacturing mergers, her music, her ancient societies, her gold standard and her sinking fund. To put to an English hostess such queries as:

‘What do you consider to be the cultural reactions of contemporary art upon the national life of England to-day?’

or,

‘In what relations do the societies or institutes governing the various professions in England stand towards persons practising those professions?’

is but to invite a well-merited rebuke.

Manners and etiquette, however, must never be forgotten. These are extremely difficult. There is an intimate and a less intimate way of addressing a butler, an arc duke, just as there is of eating artichokes, asparagus and eggs. Only by frequent consultations of my little book called ‘The Democrat At The Breakfast Table,’ now published in handy shirtcuff form, can elegance be acquired both during mouthfuls and in between.

RECEIVED  
D. P. R. I.

Anecdoteage, the American visitor should remember, is in England a snare. Too often by the end of the third or fourth paragraph, and long before the point is reached of what the Irishman said, a glassy expression has come into his hostess's eye, and she has turned to rearrange a rose which has drooped on to the cloth. The age of the wits in England is dead, and the raconteurs have passed into the service of the Press.

## MISCELLANEOUS



## THE CROWN AND THE THAMES

By E. V. LUCAS

From *The Times*, July 8th, 1921

*E. V. Lucas is a sophisticated Elia. He sees life clearly and he sees it nearly whole. He passes easily and naturally from the Athenaeum to the National Sporting Club, and is equally at home in both. He knows all about old masters and young cricketers. He was born a Quaker, and Quakers never wear their hearts on their sleeves. Few men, indeed, have written so much as E. V. and have revealed so little of themselves. Nevertheless, he is the very prince of gossipers.*

FROM the days when Henry VIII made Whitehall a royal palace, to those of William and Mary when Whitehall was given up, the Thames and the Crown were very closely associated. Henry VIII, indeed, brought the river into most of his pageants, the Coronation of Anne Boleyn being, perhaps, the most magnificent spectacle that it has ever seen. The Queen was fetched by the Lord Mayor from Greenwich, with the most elaborate ceremonial.

Each Lord Mayor occupied his State barge every November 9 from 1453 until 1858, his triumphal progress to Westminster being by water and the return journey to the City by road. Why the river pageant should have been discontinued after 1858 I have no knowledge—possibly because the Thames was steadily becoming more commercial. The City Companies had their barges, too, and took part. There are persons still living who must remember these extinct 'Shows.'

Queen Elizabeth, during her life, made many a glittering progress on the Thames, and after her death at Richmond her illustrious corpse was towed to Whitehall, and thence borne

to the Abbey. According to a nameless poet of the day, 'at every stroke the oars did let tears fall'; the fish 'wept out their eyes'; and there was such grief among the population that the barge 'would have come by water if it had come by land'! For any comparable pageant of Thames-side woe we have to skip three centuries, until 1806, when Nelson's body was brought from Greenwich Hospital to Whitehall for burial in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Certain old Thames customs could hardly be re-established; but others could take their place. Salmon, for example, would never return to be caught in the very heart of London, the first of the season always going to the King's table, carried thither by Thames fishermen. Nor is bathing in the London Thames likely to be much practised, as it was even by Charles II, for whom, as he disported himself on the Fulham side, Colonel Blood waited among the rushes hoping to get a shot at him. As late as 1807 Lord Byron swam from Lambeth to Blackfriars.

Although modern Thames swimming is unlikely, it would probably need very little encouragement from the right quarter to make motor-boating the vogue. If a certain attractive and popular Personage cared to add a motor-boat to his belongings, and flash up and down the river between Westminster and Greenwich, his example would quickly be followed.

There are doubtless very good reasons why the old penny steamers have gone. Electric trams are quicker; the Thames is not a commercial highway for retailers; all the popular resorts—theatres, restaurants, shops, and so forth—are now a long distance from it; the riverside City residence is no more. But there is no reason at all why there should be any loss of curiosity about so romantic a stream. Londoners may be careless of their own treasure, but one would have thought that, at any rate, foreigners and provincials would want to see the

wonderful city from mid-stream. Our American visitors alone should be numerically strong enough and enquiring enough to keep a flotilla busy. But no. Life is full of unexpected things, and this want of interest in the Thames anywhere below Richmond is not the least of them.

But a change may be imminent. It is by no means unlikely that the charabanc craze will bring back the steamboat and electrical motor launch, and then the lower Thames will come to its own again. For if the principal desire of charabangers is to be moving in the open air, they will be far better on the river, where there is always a breeze and never any dust. And goals of an equal allurements to those which they now visit would be discovered: Greenwich and Margate in one direction, and Kew and Kingston and Hampton Court in the other. If the river steamboats came back, perhaps the glories of Greenwich would come back too, and whitebait banquets be again fashionable. It is not impossible that the decay of our successive Governments is in no small measure due to the fact that Ministers, with or without portfolios, no longer consume whitebait together. If they did so once more, and if every member of Parliament used his £400 to keep a motor-boat moored off the Terrace, in order to have an invigorating blow now and then, the country would not suffer.



## A MYSTIC ON ÆSTHETICS

BY SIR PETER CHALMERS MITCHELL

From *The Times*, July 19th, 1920

*Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell is a man of science, a man of letters, a man of business. He is Secretary of the Zoological Society and has, at the same time, made life pleasant for the animals in his care and filled the coffers of the Society, a frequent leader writer in The Times, and a director of successful business concerns. He is a man of pungent and satiric humour, impatient of less gifted men who are offended by his satire, but inclined to tolerant affection for those who are not. Incidentally, his good deeds are many and always carefully concealed.*

'Now I will show you a secret,' said the mystic, laying down his pipe. He filled a pen with ink, and flicked it over the clean blotting-sheet. There were many blots. Some were placid, wavering, and crinkled at the margins. Some were explosive splashes, shooting angularly from the point of incidence. Some were individual and incoherent, others in constellations or curves, linked expressions of dynamic unity. He pored over the sheet, questing from mark to mark. Then, with a delicate brush, he rounded an angle, sharpened an outline, drew slender connecting lines. Smiling and satisfied, he cut two little squares from the sheet, fixed them on cards and passed them to me. They were characteristic examples of his strange art. One was impassive and complete, a cold image of something selfish, eternal and hypnotic. The other writhed and flickered in its active, uneasy claim on the attention.

'I can see only in the flat,' said the mystic. 'The moving clouds, coals melting and splintering in the grate, and the wax as it gutters down the candle are for me arrested on a plane, in which my eye and hand can work only up and down, to the

right and to the left. Could I model or carve, I should gather flints from the beach, throw melted lead into water, or in Paris or Amsterdam buy fragments from the diamond cutters, broken emeralds, and pearls rejected from the smooth monotony of a string. With a chisel and silver wire, with pinches of cement and scraps of paste, I should recall beauty that I see in dreams, and run where now I walk.'

This bored me, because I hoped for explanation, not rhapsody. I suggested that no doubt four dimensions would be as much better than three as three were better than two. I hinted that four-dimensional space was favourably viewed in spiritualistic circles, now that wireless telegraphy had been put on an inconveniently practical footing by engineers. He grinned amiably, and said that we might 'cut that rubbish,' and would I say what I was really thinking. And so I did. It was irrelevant that he, a worker in two dimensions, sometimes wished to work in three, or that an artist in black-and-white had a longing for colour. It was a side-issue whether sculpture or jewelry could be more beautiful than drawing, or colour than colourless form. These issues we could discuss at any time, and for any time. But he and I both agreed, or we could assume for the moment, that his own work was beautiful. How did the beauty come? He had shown me the trick of it, so to say. But the secret of creation did not reside in a technical method, in a private formula that could be patented, like the prescription for a chemical dye. He would agree, all the better because he knew me responsive to his art, that I had a sense of beauty, instinctive and also trained. He knew that I had mental quickness and some skill. But did he believe that were I to follow his method I should achieve his result? Was it so simple? What he had shown me was an accident or an incident, not the essential of his work, an accident or incident become necessary to him, as there were poets who could write only with a quill. Imagination had to have the stage set for

it, and the setting, once a coincidence, had become a limiting habit.

'My good man,' said the mystic, 'I can't predict what you would do if you were to give yourself a chance. But when you talk of imagination, and of intelligence, and of a trained sense of beauty, I suspect that your only chance would come to you through drink, or opium, or a plunge into excesses of vice or of virtue. You must get rid of your notion of the human soul proudly creating beauty out of itself, compounding it out of little tags and rags of instincts and impressions, of thoughts and emotions. For you, as for children and savages—and for mystics—things must become objective, real, external, not the products of a gift that makes you greater than others, not fantasies by whose creation you reveal your genius. You have to recognise beauty, accepting it with docility and gratitude where you find it.

'I search amongst the accidents of form, reject the trivial, and recognise beauty that requires only completion. Why it is beautiful I do not know; I know only that it is beautiful. Sometimes I think of it only as a harmony between certain presentations of matter and the presentations of matter out of which our senses and our souls were shaped, a chance congruity between the rhythms of our senses and our soul and the rhythms of matter. Sometimes I seek a remoter link, and fancy the soul older than and independent of matter and body. With Wordsworth I think that I am recalling 'that immortal sea which brought us hither.' Recognition may be recollection, and the trifles that awaken it may be as inconsequent as the whiff of musk that recalls a mislaid memory. But these are theories. My profession of faith is that beauty comes to the artist by recognition, not by creation, and that it is external to us, not a projection of our minds.'

## FAREWELL TO FLEET STREET

BY HENRY W. NEVINSON

From *The Nation*, December 18th, 1909

*H. W. Nevinston is one of the old gang, and a mighty fine gang it was, and indeed still is. He has journeyed up and down the earth, he has known everybody worth knowing and seen everything worth seeing, and he remains a man of outstanding virility. He has always been the friend of the under-dog, with an outspoken hatred of shams and pretence.*

It is still early, but dinner is over—not the club dinner with its buzzing conversation, nor yet the restaurant dinner, hurried into the ten minutes between someone's momentous speech and the leader that has to be written on it. The suburban dinner is over, and there was no need to hurry. They tell me I shall be healthier now. What do I care about being healthier?

Shall I sit with a novel over the fire? Shall I take life at second hand and work up an interest in imaginary loves and the exigencies of shadows? What are all the firesides and fictions of the world to me that I should loiter here and doze, doze, as good as die?

They tell me it is a fine thing to take a little walk before bedtime. I go out into the suburban street. A thin, wet mist hangs over the silent and monotonous houses, and blurs the electric lamps along our road. There will be a fog in Fleet Street to-night, but everyone is too busy to notice it. How friendly a fog made us all! How jolly it was that night when I ran straight into a *Chronicle* man, and got a lead of him by a short head over the same curse! There's no chance of running into anyone here, let alone cursing! A few figures slouch past and

disappear; the last postman goes his round, knocking at one house in ten; up and down the asphalt path leading into the obscurity of the Common a wretched woman wanders in vain; the long, pointed windows of a chapel glimmer with yellowish light through the dingy air, and I hear the faint groans of a harmonium cheering the people dismally home. The groaning ceases, the lights go out, service is over; it will soon be time for decent people to be in bed.

In Fleet Street the telegrams will now be falling thick as— No, I won't say it! No Vallombrosa for me, nor any other journalistic tag! I remember once a young sub-editor had got as far as, 'The cry is still——' when I took him by the throat. I have done the State some service.

Our sub-editors' room is humming now: a low murmur of questions, rapid orders, the rustle of paper, the quick alarum of telephones. Boys keep bringing telegrams in orange envelopes. Each sub-editor is bent over his little lot of news. One sorts out the speeches from bundles of flimsy. The middle of Lloyd George's speech has got mixed up with Balfour's peroration. If he left them mixed, would anyone be the less wise? Perhaps the speakers might notice it, and that man from Wiltshire would be sure to write saying he had always supported Mr. Balfour, and heartily welcomed this fresh evidence of his consistency.

'Six columns speeches in already; how much?' asks the sub-editor. 'Column and quarter,' comes answer from the head of the table, and the cutting begins. Another sub-editor pieces together an interview about the approaching comet. 'Keep comet to three sticks,' comes the order, and the comet's perihelion is abbreviated. Another guts a blue-book on prison statistics as savagely as though he were disembowelling the whole criminal population.

There's the telephone ringing. 'Hullo, hullo!' calls a sub-editor quietly. 'Who are you? Margate mystery? Go ahead.

They've found the corpse? All right. Keep it to a column, but send a good story. Horrible mutilations? Good. Glimpse the corpse yourself if you can. Yes. Send full mutilations. Will call for them at eleven. Good-bye.' 'You doing the Archbishop, Mr. Jones?' asks the head of the table. 'Cup-tie at Sunderland,' answers Mr. Jones, and all the time the boys go in and out with those orange-coloured bulletins of the world's health.

What's a man to do at night out here? Let's have a look at all those posters displayed in front of the Free Library, where a few poor creatures are still reading last night's news for the warmth. Next week there's a concert of chamber-music in the Town Hall. I suppose I might go to that, just to 'kill time,' as they say. Think of a journalist wanting to kill time! Or to kill anything but another fellow's 'stuff,' and sometimes an editor! Then there's a boxing competition at the St. John's Arms, and a subscription dance in the Nelson Rooms, and a lecture on Dante, with illustrations from contemporary art, for working men and women, at the Institute. Also there's something called the Why-Be-Lonesome Club for promoting friendly social intercourse among the young and old of all classes. I suppose I might go to that, too. It sounds comprehensive.

There seems no need to be dull in the suburbs. A man in a cart is still crying coke down the street. Another desires to sell clothes-props. A brace of lovers come stealing out of the Common through the mist, careless of mud and soaking grass. I suppose people would say I'm too old to make love on a County Council bench. In love's cash-books the balance sheet of years is kept with remorseless accuracy.

The foreign editors are waiting now in their silent room, and the telegrams come to them from the ends of the world. They fold them in packets together by countries or continents—the Indian stuff, the Russian stuff, the Egyptian, Balkan, Austrian, South African, Persian, Japanese, American,

Spanish, and all the rest. They'll have pretty nearly seven columns by this time, and the order will come, 'Two-and-a-half foreign.' Then the piecing and cutting will begin. One of them sits in a telephone box with bands across his head, and repeats a message from our Paris correspondent. Through our Paris man we can talk with Berlin and Rome.

From this rising ground I can see the light of the city reflected on the misty air, and somewhere mingled in that light are the big lamps down in Fleet Street. The city's voice comes to me like a confused murmur through a telephone when the words are unintelligible. The only distinct sounds are the dripping of the moisture from the trees in suburban gardens, and the voice of an old lady imploring her pet dog to return from his evening walk.

The voice of all the world is now heard in that silent room. From moment to moment news is coming of treaties and revolutions, of sultans deposed and kings enthroned, of commerce and failures, of shipwrecks, earthquakes, and explorations, of wars and flooded camps and sieges, of intrigue, diplomacy, and assassination, of love, murder, revenge, and all the public joy and sorrow and business of mankind. All the voices of fear, hope, and lamentation echo in that silent little room; and maps hang on the walls, and guide-books are always ready, for who knows where the next event may come to pass upon this energetic little earth, already twisting for a hundred million years around the sun?

The editor must be back by now. Calm and decisive, he takes his seat in his own room, like the conductor of an orchestra preparing to raise his baton now that the tuning-up is finished. The leader-writers are coming in for their instructions. No need for much consultation to-night—not for the first leader anyhow. For the second—well, there are a good many things one could suggest: Turkey or Persia or the eternal German Dreadnought for a foreign subject; the stage

censorship or the price of cotton; and the cup-ties, or the extinction of hats for both sexes as a light note to finish with. He's always labouring to invent 'something light,' is the editor. He says we must sometimes consider the public; just as though we wrote the rest of the paper for our own private fun.

But there's no doubt about the first leader to-night. There's only one subject on which it would be a shock to every reader in the morning not to find it written. And, my word, what a subject it is! What seriousness and indignation and conviction one could get into it! I should begin by restating the situation. You must always assume that the reader's ignorance is new every morning, as love should be; and anyone who happens to know something about it likes to see he was right. I should work in adroit references to this evening's speeches, and that would fill the first paragraph—say, three sides of my copy, or something over. In the second paragraph I'd show the immense issues involved in the present contest, and expose the fallacies of our opponents who attempt to belittle the matter as temporary and unlikely to recur—say, three sides of my copy again, but not a word more. And, then, in the third paragraph, I'd adjure the Government, in the name of all their party hold sacred, to stand firm, and I'd appeal to the people of this great Empire never to allow their ancient liberties to be encroached upon or overridden by a set of irresponsible—well, in short, I should be like General Sherman when at the crisis of a battle he used to say, 'Now, let everything go in'—four sides of my copy, or even five if the stuff is running well.

Somebody must be writing that leader now. Possibly he is doing it better than I should, but I hope not. When Hannibal wandered all those years in Asia at the Court of silly Antiochus this or stupid Prusias the other, and knew that Carthage was falling to ruin while he alone might have saved her if only she had allowed him, would he have rejoiced to hear that



someone else was succeeding better than himself—had traversed the Alps with a bigger army, had won a second Cannæ, and even at Zama snatched a decisive victory? Hannibal might have rejoiced. He was a very exceptional man.

But here's a poor creature still playing the clarinet down the street, on the pretence of giving pleasure worth a penny. Yes, my boy, I know you're out of work, and that is why you play the *Last Rose of Summer* and *When Other Lips*. I am out of work, too, and I can't play anything. You say you learnt when a boy, and once played in the orchestra at Drury Lane; but now you've come to wandering about suburban streets, and having finished *When Other Lips*, you will quite naturally play *My Lodging's on the Cold Ground*. Only last night I was playing in an orchestra myself, not a hundred miles (obsolete journalistic tag!)—not a hundred miles from Drury Lane. It was a grand orchestra, that of ours. Night by night it played the symphony of the world, and each night a new symphony was performed, without rehearsal. The drums of our orchestra were the echoes of thundering wars; the flutes and soft recorders were the eloquence of an Empire's statesmen; and our 'cellos and violins wailed with the pity of all mankind. In that vast orchestra I played the horn that sounds the charge, or with its sharp *réveille* vexes the ear of night before the sun is up. Here is your penny, my brother in affliction. I, too, have once joined in the music of a star, and now wander the suburban streets.

That leader-writer has not finished yet, but the proofs of the beginning of his article will be coming down. In an hour or so his work will be over, and he will pass out into the street exhausted, but happy with the sense of function fulfilled. Fleet Street is quieter now. The lamps gleam through the fog, a motor-'bus thunders by, a few last messengers flit along with the latest telegrams, and some stragglers from the restaurants come singing past the Temple. For a few moments there is

silence but for the leader-writer's quick footsteps on the pavement. He is some hours in front of the morning's news, and in a few hours more than half a million people will be reading what he has just written, and will quote it to each other as their own. How often I have had whole sentences of my stuff thrown at me as conclusive arguments almost before the printing ink was dry!

Here I stand, beside a solitary lamp-post upon a suburban acclivity. The light of the city's existence—I think my successor would say, of her pulsating and palpitating or æbullient existence—is pale upon the sky, and the murmur of her voice sounds like large but distant waves. I stand alone, and near me there is no sound but the complaint of a homeless tramp swearing at the cold as he settles down upon a bench for the night.

How I used to swear at that boy for not coming quick enough to fetch my copy! I knew the young scoundrel's step—I knew the step of every man and boy in that office. I knew the way each of them went up and down the stairs, and coughed or whistled or spat. What knowledge dies with me now that I am gone! *Qualis artifex pereo!* But that boy—how I should love to be swearing at him now! I wonder whether he misses me. I hope he does. 'It would be an assurance most dear,' as an old song of exile used to say.

BEAUTY—THE ASSURANCE OF THE  
WORLD

BY JOHN DRINKWATER

From the *Evening Standard*, Oct. 22nd, 1929.

*John Drinkwater's father was a famous producer of plays, and Drinkwater began his life as a clerk in Birmingham. His journalism has been incidental to his play and book writing, and the article printed here is a very charming illustration of his point of view.*

BEAUTY, like truth and life itself, has defied the definition of the philosophers, and remains beyond the precise calculations of the reason. And yet it is something that is immediately recognisable at sight by every man. In art there are moments when it becomes a debatable quality. People of taste and intelligence may quarrel as to whether the work of Gauguin and Stravinski and James Joyce is or is not beautiful, but in contemplating the universal aspects of nature a common agreement is found. A sunlit apple-orchard in full spring blossom is a thing of beauty beyond argument. Even the most insatiable thirst for notoriety will induce no man to pretend that here is a spectacle which is stale and over-rated. You may raise your brows at Mendelssohn or Swinburne, but you cannot do so at an apple-orchard without passing for a mere buffoon.

And yet, knowing the thing at sight, the secret still escapes us. Why is our apple-orchard beautiful? Association of ideas has something to do with it, but that is not all. The bounty of the earth, the promise of harvest, and the satisfaction of our appetites, are all implied in that cloud of bloom, but are not these to some extent implied also in the revolting spectacle of

the shambles? Nor does the idea of perfect fitness to an end cover our difficulty. Plainly many things are beautiful that cannot in any common acceptance of the word be said to be useful. General Paoli once informed Dr. Johnson that there could be no beauty independent of utility. Whereupon the Doctor asked him what was the particular use of the very delightful painting on the coffee cup from which he was drinking.

Keats's classic phrase says everything about the matter, and yet we must almost feel that it leaves everything unsaid. Beauty is truth, truth beauty—how incontestably right we know this to be, and yet on reflection how inscrutable its rightness remains. And this inscrutability defeats us to the last. But in the defeat we suffer nothing, for the beauty and our recognition of it remain. Like the other great elements of our experience, God, and forgiveness, and atonement, and immortality, beauty is not the less a reality for us because we are unable wholly to comprehend its nature.

Apart from primitive passions, like hunger, it is this beauty that has always most profoundly influenced the minds of men. It may even be questioned whether love itself is a purer motion of the spirit, a condition which brings us so near to our divine origins. Poetry has always been charged with beauty's praise, and still more with the almost unbearable poignancy of its passing. The motif of the falling leaf is one that wakes a response in every heart. And we fear death not because of an unknown hereafter or retribution to come, but because it is our severance from the loveliness of earth and character and the achievements of man's unconquerable mind. I remember no more moving moment in biography than that which tells of David Cox, knowing at the age of seventy-six that the end was coming, standing in his parlour with his work on the walls around him and saying, 'Good-bye, pictures,' before going up to his bedroom for the last time.

Earth, and character, and the achievement of man's mind—these are the sources of the beauty that we cherish with so trembling an emotion. The truisms of the natural world have the inexhaustible vitality of the rarest genius. Day follows day with infinite variety in an endless repetition of change, rich in accustomed intimacies of untiring freshness. The apple-orchard, the sunset, the wind in the leaves, plums on the wall, the moorhens among the reeds, the whole platitudinous catalogue is bright with wonder at every new printing. And not less durable is that other beauty engendered by the excellent and endearing elements of character. If we move among the natural world often hardly sensible of the virtue and refreshment that we are absorbing from its spirit, still more given are we to underprize those currents of sympathy and affection and even conflict that are flowing continually between ourselves and our fellows. I say even conflict, because the beauty of these contacts, the beauty, that is to say, which is born of our sense of character, does not necessarily depend upon the pleasure of the affections. It is even possible for us to experience beauty in this sense in our relation with someone towards whom we have a definite antagonism. The phenomenon reveals itself most clearly when we consider creative art. Shakespeare was not less energised by the monstrosities of Iago than he was by the lyric sweetness of Rosalind. It is notable in the experience of us all that while we like best being with people whom we like, there are times when we just want to be with people generally whether we like them or not. The sane mind needs always its periods of seclusion, but I suppose there is nothing so terrible to the imagination as the horrors of solitary confinement.

Considering nature, then, and the character of man, we realise that to love life because of its beauty, is to love it for the first and abiding condition that makes it desirable at all. And if we bring to our reckoning that final beauty which has

been evolved through the ages by the incandescence of man's mind in its most urgent moods, the account is full. Here we have beauty of a less primitive essence, a beauty not bestowed upon the world in the dawn of things, but slowly won for himself by the toiling of man's will. The achievement that sets man apart from the rest of known creation is the beauty formed by his deliberating intelligence. In splendour of being and in a sense of environment there is no knowing but what the animals, the flowers, and even the stones, may fulfil themselves as freely as we, and, thus far, beauty for them would be as deep a reality. But beyond being ourselves, and sensibility to the being of others, we have learnt to articulate in shapes that take on a being of their own. Man feels and he makes poetry, he understands and philosophy is born, he learns and speculation speaks with the authority of science. And so the boundaries of beauty are extended and its power upon our lives advanced. It is the assurance of the world, and without it we are nothing.

## AN AMERICAN NOTE

BY HUGH WALPOLE

From the *Week End Review*, April 5th, 1930.

*Hugh Walpole is a successful novelist and an acute appraiser of other people's novels. He is as popular in the Middle West as in the West-end.*

NOTHING is stranger, as every traveller must often have been aware, than the speed with which America slips away from you after a day at sea. 'Well, that's what America is like,' you say, after the first six hours. 'That's what I *think* it's like,' you

say after twelve hours more. Nothing, in fact, is odder than the strange ideas that most Americans have about Europe; nothing—except the fantastic ideas that most Europeans have about America. It is a platitude to say that all the books about America by Europeans are bad (all except Mr. Siegfried's). So honest an observer as Mr. Wells, for instance, goes to America and brings back nothing at all. Why is it?

I am myself anything but an honest observer. I like the country and the people too much. As usual I romanticise the place. Visit after visit I pay, and all I can murmur on my return is that the Grand Canyon is This, that New York is That, and I know a Lady in St. Louis. But this time I feel that I have something of value in my pocket, namely, that America is two quite separate nations—yes, quite separate and growing more separate every minute. 'Until this is realised,' I loudly cry, 'no one is going to be happy. Europe cannot understand America until she grasps this fact.'

Have I got something of value in my pocket this time? I don't know. It seems to me that I have. My friends in England who have visited America very little, if at all, see it as a country of skyscrapers, bad taste, vigour and murder. They envisage New York because of the skyscrapers and Chicago because of the murders. They think the fight about Prohibition ridiculous. They think the Americans greedy about the Debt. They hear that they are very hospitable; and that is all. What nobody in England seems at all to realise is that the right hand of the United States has no longer the slightest notion of what the left hand is doing. The right hand (which is the hand of the old properly-descended colonial-ancestored, cultured and civilised American) is to-day completely bewildered by the left hand (which is the logical grandchild of the wild two-generation-ago immigrant—immigrant from Italy, Poland, Hungary, Russia). Not only bewildered but helpless. Every system arranged by the right hand for the decent governance

of the country has broken down under the wild new independence of the left. Not only does the left hand scream with derision at Washington when it considers Washington at all, but it raises its fingers to its nose at any kind of law, order or discipline, and is producing quite happily a kind of mediaeval bear-garden that is alive, picturesque, romantic and the most libertine state of society that the world has seen since the Middle Ages.

By this I do not mean that if you go to Chicago you will hear nothing but machine-guns, or that in Detroit or St. Louis there is a corpse on every door-step. Not at all. Chicago will soon be the most beautiful city of the modern world. Art, music, the sciences are flourishing there as they are nowhere flourishing in Europe. On the other hand, incredible situations occur at every turn—incredible, that is, to a European. In a certain town a number of my friends had a dinner-party in a charming private residence. In the middle of dinner they were held up by six black-masked bandits, who took their jewellery and departed. I went one afternoon to the trial of one of the bandits, a pleasant young fellow with an almost-Oxford accent, blue eyes and beautiful manners. Some friends of his tried to prove an alibi, and one of these friends was a bar-tender, who swore that he had served the Millionaire Kid with brandy and whisky at precisely the moment of the ‘hold-up.’

‘Brandy and whisky?’ cried the judge. ‘If you were serving brandy and whisky you should be in the dock yourself.’ Whereupon everyone in the court, the judge included, took it for understood that never had brandy or whisky been heard of in this town, that speak-easies were unknown and that the Millionaire Kid had been drinking tea with the bar-tender and probably playing a friendly little game of ‘beggar my neighbour.’

It was not, however, the charming ‘Alice in Wonderland’



atmosphere of this afternoon that so especially enchanted me, nor the ease with which everyone in the court so swiftly achieved an amiable hypocrisy, but rather that I saw here a complete picture of the left and the right hand brought into easy and natural contact. There was the Millionaire Kid with his friends and allies—the bar-tender, the owner of the speak-easy, the lady friends, the brothers, sisters, mothers and cousins. (Also belonging to the left, although they would not, of course, immediately acknowledge it, were the detectives, police officers and Prohibition officials.) On the other side were the judge, the charming ladies who had been robbed, the brothers, husbands, fathers and friends of the same. The force of the parties seemed to be equally divided, but it was not so. It is true that the Millionaire Kid was sent to prison for life, but he will not be in prison very long. Why? Because, with every hour that passes, the left hand grows stronger than the right. The change in three years since my last visit is astounding.

The vigour of the left hand is everywhere. The clothes, pastimes, dwelling-places, sports, newspapers of the left hand are overwhelmingly in evidence. The quarrel over Prohibition has simply emphasised this. In Fifty-Third Street in New York there are fifty speak-easies. Well, and why not? The left hand knows what it wants and will see that it gets it. And it is from the left hand that the future America is coming. It is just now crude, ill-disciplined, half-educated, scornful, selfish and rebellious. It will not always be so. It has more vigour than any other body of people in the world, save possibly Young Russia. It is eager, excited, violent. It is reading books of every kind. The drug stores in America are filled with dollar books that are *bought*, not borrowed from circulating libraries. It goes to plays like *Berkeley Square* and *Street Scene* with eager enthusiasm. It despises the present system of American government, and is shortly going to make one of its own. It

cares less than nothing for the future or prosperity of Europe save in so far as they concern the New America.

And the right hand? There are no kinder, warmer-hearted people anywhere—but it is not with them that the future of America lies. They are bewildered and baffled as we ourselves would be in like case. It is of no use for any of us here to make our appeal to them. It is not in their hands that future decisions will lie.

## THE ARTISTIC SIDE

By G. K. CHESTERTON

From *G.K.'s Weekly*, Nov. 29th, 1930.

*G. K. Chesterton is a humorist who enjoys his own jokes, and that is one reason why other people also enjoy them. I have described elsewhere how I once saw him reading a proof under a lamp-post in Fleet Street and chuckling with satisfaction as he read, and that picture of him recurs to me over and over again in reading his books and his articles. He rejoices in controversy, but he never fails in good humour and he never bears malice. Some of his best work was done for the Daily News, and he has had a weekly article in the Illustrated London News for many years.*

IN the days of my early youth, in the days of the Yellow Book and the Green Carnation, there were many idle fancies that were quite harmless because they were fanciful, as well as one or two which hardened into evil imaginations. A curious legend has arisen that the Yellow Book, with its grave contributions by Henry James or its innocent contributions by Kenneth Graham, was a book of black, or at least of yellow magic. As a matter of fact, the Yellow Book might almost have been a Blue Book, so far as the harmless and humdrum

sobriety of much of its printed matter went; and even the Green Carnation was not so green as it was painted. These things were seen afterwards in the lurid light that shone backwards from the shameful illumination of one individual career; but at the time most of us saw very little harm in them; or at least very little harm of this particular kind. The peacock's feather of the æsthete had not yet proved itself a true type of ill-luck; and a man might be irritated with Whistler for posing so persistently as a Butterfly, without associating him with the real moth that corrupts; or any of the subsequent corruption.

Among the pleasing fancies that occurred to us in those early days was a sense of the poetry of London; and, in the days when I wrote a fortunately forgotten work called *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, I quite honestly felt that I was adorning a neglected thing, when I felt impelled to write about lamp-posts as one-eyed giants or hansom cabs as yawning dragons with two flaming optics, or painted omnibuses as coloured ships or castles, or all the rest of it. And now, after many years of controversy and complications, and collisions with all sorts of other questions, I come back to the same feeling in a new way, but with something of an undiminished freshness. I still hold, every bit as firmly as when I wrote *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, that the suburbs ought to be either glorified by romance and religion or else destroyed by fire from heaven, or even by firebrands from the earth. I still hold that it is the main earthly business of a human being to make his home, and the immediate surroundings of his home, as symbolic and significant to his own imagination as he can; whether the home be in Notting Hill or Nicaragua, in Palestine or in Pittsburgh. But an experience of the mingled strands of modern life has led me to consider the problem in a slightly different way; though I will claim to have added to my views rather than abandoned them.

I know no better exercise in that art of wonder, which is the life of man and the beginning of the praise of God, than to travel in a train through a long dark, almost uninterrupted, tunnel; until the traveller has grown almost accustomed to dusk and a dead blank background of brick. At last, after long stretches and at long intervals, the wall will suddenly break in two, and give a glowing glimpse of the land of the living. It may be a chasm of daylight showing a bright and busy street. It may be a similar flash of light on a long lonely road of poplars, with a solitary human figure plodding across the vast countryside. I know not which of the two gives a more startling stab of human vitality. Sometimes the grey façade is broken by the lighted windows of a house, almost overhanging the railway-line; and for an instant we look deep into a domestic interior; chamber within chamber of a glowing and coloured human home. That is the way in which objects ought to be seen; separate; illuminated; and above all, contrasted against blank night or bare walls; as indeed these living creations do stand eternally contrasted with the colourless chaos out of which they came. Travelling in this fashion the other day, I was continually haunted, and almost tormented, with an impression that I could not disentangle; nor am I at all confident that I can disentangle it here.

It seemed to me that I saw very strange sights; which ought to have been significant sights. I looked suddenly through an open window into a little room that was filled with blue light; something much bluer than we see in moonlight, even once in a blue moon. It came apparently from the blue shade that completely hooded a lamp standing on the table; there was nothing else on the table but an open book, which gleamed almost pale blue in that bleak luminosity. There was nobody there; there was nothing else. And I had an indescribable subconscious sense that it ought to mean something; and there massed vaguely at the back of my mind like blue clouds, the

colours that cling about the Blessed Virgin in the old pictures and the visions seen in narrow rooms and cells. Then again I saw a square patch of burning red, which was but the red curtain covering a lighted room. But there was a shadow that moved sharply across it, lifting long arms, arms of an unnatural exaggerated length, and making the black pattern of a cross upon the burning scarlet. It was impossible not to feel that somebody had made a signal to the train. Yet somebody had only stretched his arms, probably with a yawn, before going indifferently to bed. All along that night journey there were these signals signifying nothing. And I grew conscious, in a way quite beyond expression, that there is indeed a poetry of modern life, and of the modern cities; but it is in some strange way a poetry of misfits; a tangle of misunderstood messages; an alphabet all higgledy-piggledy in a heap. Beautiful things ought to mean beautiful things, and the case for simpler conditions is that, on the whole, they do. That indestructibility of religion, and even of ritualism, which puzzles the poor old rationalist so much, is not a little due to the fact that in ritual, for the first time, modern men see forms and colours placed where they mean something. Anybody can see why the priest's vestment on common days is green like the common fields, and on martyrs' days red as blood. But that blood-red curtain I saw from the train either commemorated no martyrdom; or the man crucified within did not know that his martyrdom was commemorated.

We have never pretended that Distributism is a Utopia; a paradise with no misfits. But the case for it, on the artistic side, is that when things are simplified to single ownership, there is some tendency for them to be significant. What is the matter with modern towns and houses is not that they are not beautiful, but that they do not signify the people who live in them. Forty villas, built by a jerry-builder in a row, may happen to have accidental effects of moonlight or lamplight that are

quite beautiful. But the colour of the houses was not chosen by the householders; and even the lamplight within may come from what is, in the most horrible sense, a standard lamp.

## A COUPLET

BY HILAIRE BELLOC

From *The Universe*, July 11th, 1930.

*Hilaire Belloc is a great stylist. Few men of his generation have written so much. No man has ever written better. He writes always from a definite point of view. He is impatient of opposition, scornful of disagreement, a little too earnest, perhaps, to be an altogether successful propagandist. He has made many enemies in his life, as a man must who possesses Belloc's qualities, but he has been an invaluable friend to many a man to whom the fates have not been too kind. He is always the defender of the over-criticised. He possesses, indeed, a great deal of the characteristic chivalry of the Middle Ages of which he is the spiritual child. He hates compromise and millionaires, and everything that is ugly, and most things that are modern.*

WHEN a man sails down the northern coast of Sicily, going east to west from the Straits of Messina towards Trapani, he passes by a series of strong headlands, high and dark, which rise straight from the sea and open one after the other in successive capes upon his journey. When he has so proceeded for the greater part of his voyage, about half a day's sail before the main harbour of Palermo, he will note a most striking rocky hill, very high, detached from the main run of the highlands, and jutting out towards the shore, under the further edge of which lies a sort of shelter rather than a haven: a shelter against the Levanter and all the strong winds between north and west round by east. This towering great rock, this

haven, are the rock and the haven of Cefalu, which take their name by corruption from the original Greek word meaning a 'head': for this mighty mass of stone has just this outline as you come upon it from the east before rounding into its nook of shelter.

Here one of the early Norman kings, caught in a storm, vowed while he was yet in peril to build a church if he could make land, and finding refuge under the lee of the great height duly performed his vow.

He set up the church which still stands; and in it, round the half dome of the apse above the high altar he had affixed a most majestic mosaic of Our Lord in Glory, coming to Judgment, and underneath that awful portraiture he caused to be fixed, also in mosaic, two Latin lines, the one a hexameter, the other a pentameter. All this was done in the lifetime before the year 1200: that is, some seven and a half centuries ago. And there they stand to this day, quite unchanged; for mosaic is the most enduring of all ornament.

It is upon these lines that I would write here. They are as follows:

FACTUS HOMO, FACTOR HOMINIS, FACTIQUE REDEMPTOR  
JUDICO CORPOREUS CORPORA CORDA DEUS.

This couplet seems to me to sum up more completely than any other statement of similar length the whole Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation, its intention and consequence.

Now who wrote it?

Let me translate it here, very imperfectly and at far too great a length—but expansion is necessary to translate the intimate meanings:

'I, who was made man and who was the maker of man,  
and who am the Redeemer of what I made

'Being of human frame, do judge the bodies and the  
hearts of men: and I am God.'

I say it is impossible in any translation to give the original, and in a thing as powerful as this the impossibility is manifest. Terseness, packing your meaning, is the very essence of power in metrical statement, and I suppose this quality of terseness could nowhere be found more triumphant than in these stupendous lines. Were I to expand the translation further, I might the more bring out the depths of the original. Thus the two words 'corpora corda' imply the bodily appetites, the physical actions, the outward energies of men, and also their thoughts and their affections, their loyalties and treasons, their faith and their despair. While the word 'Deus' at the end means not only God, nor only 'And I am God,' but still more, 'For I am also God'; and on the top of this the word 'Deus' is final in meaning as in position. It sums up the whole affair, and clinches down the proclamation, giving it complete substance and full stature. The verses are an amazing thing altogether.

Well, who wrote that couplet? Or if we do not know the name of the man who wrote it, where is it first to be found? I wonder whether any reader of these lines can help me in the matter?

I have spent a great deal of trouble in the way of research over a great many things in the course of my life. I have worked like a beaver to discover the epitaph of Cadwalla, King of Sussex and of the Isle of Wight and of Hampshire, which stood in Old St. Peter's, and is supposed to be still in the crypt of New St. Peter's to-day in Rome. I have tried to trisect the plane angle, and I have discovered to my immense joy and to the confusion of wicked men the direct allusion to Ebion in Origen. But I have never been able to find the source of these two Latin lines.

No doubt it is lying open to my hand, and my ignorance will seem absurd to those who know better; but I have done my best, and I have failed. I asked the late Professor Philli-



more, who knew more about Christian Latin verse than any other man, what he could discover about it, and he confessed himself baffled. It might conceivably be St. Bernard, but that authorship would be rather early for it would be almost contemporary. It is more likely to be a thing of deeper antiquity. Or is it conceivably the flash of some genius, who wrote these two lines only, and of whom nothing else is known? I ask again whether anyone who reads this can help me, for I have a high curiosity to discover. The discovery is of no practical use. The lines will remain as powerful as ever, whether their author is known or unknown. Still, I would like to know who wrote it.

That great painter John Sargent, wandering in these parts, read those lines many years ago, and he put them (with one small change, which I regret) under that inspired Crucifixion of his in the public library at Boston: so true is it that reality strikes a chord throughout the world. Save in the public library at Boston and this church in Cefalu, I know no other place where they may be publicly read and pondered. It is a pity, for they ought to be everywhere.

I say again all this may be ignorance on my part; they may be much better known than I imagine; but they have haunted me for years as something singular, and will so haunt me, I suppose, till I die, and afterwards.

AUGUST THE FOURTH, 1914

BY DESMOND MACCARTHY

From the *New Statesman*, Aug. 8th, 1914.

*Mr. Desmond MacCarthy is Editor of Life and Letters, and was for many years Literary Editor of the New Statesman (now become the New Statesman and Nation) to which he still contributes dramatic criticism. He is perhaps most widely known to-day as the successor of Edmund Gosse in the position of chief literary critic of the Sunday Times, and as probably the most popular of B.B.C. 'talkers' on books, in which rôle he succeeds in conveying over the microphone a great deal of his personality.*

NATURE, I believe, meant me to be a special reporter, but she forgot to endow me with the knack of being 'on the spot.' But, sometimes so much worth noticing is going on everywhere that it matters little where you are. The night of August 4th was such an occasion. It does not disqualify me as a reporter that I was not in the pushing, yelling, chaffing crowds which thronged the Horse Guards or in the cheering ones outside the House of Commons.

I met at two in the morning, in the far and quiet West, and in a clean, lit, empty, residential street, an old, eager, one-eyed vendor of papers with a Union Jack in his billycock. A tattered bill fluttered before him as he shuffled wearily and hurriedly forward. 'Thrippence. Thrippence. Declaration of War.' He was trying to shout, but he only achieved a quinsied whisper. I stopped and bought. 'It's not in it,' he added, confidentially, pocketing my coppers, 'but's it true: God's truth it is—I couldn't get the latest. I was an hour and a quarter getting through the crowd.' I looked at him and felt as if I had

been in that crowd myself, and could describe it, too. 'If Mr. Disraeli was alive!' he croaked huskily. After this unexpected comment he lunged on again with bent knees, leaving me under the street lamp staring at the columns of the new, but already familiar, heavily-leaded type.

Though the region where I parted from my friends was fairly well known to me I had lost my way, and after walking about half an hour I had come out somewhere below Holland Park. How late the 'buses were running! And the taxis were buzzing one after the other down the main thoroughfare, as if it had been 10 o'clock and not two in the morning. This reminded me of public injunctions, already emphatic, concerning economy in petrol. But economy was impossible to-night; night of good-byes, of intimacies and friendships huddled into climaxes; night of sociable, equalising forebodings; night ominous to the solitary, but gay, positively gay, to the gregarious.

I had noticed on my late ramblings and strayings that 'good-nights' from passing strangers had been frequent, and that they had had a different ring. People seemed to like being stopped and asked for a match or to point out the way; their eyes were more alive, less pre-occupied, more conscious of one. When I joined a group round a coffee-stall to drink a cup of hot slop, I did not feel that customary embarrassment at not being suitably dressed. The silence round me was more friendly; some sort of barrier was down; no one asked me for money. Beside me as I drank stood one of those little, odd, undersized fly-by-nights, her grubby hands resting side by side on the oil-cloth of the counter. She looked up under her feathers and smiled. It was not the usual smile.

As I crossed, striking southward, some idea—what was it?—began to peep through these impressions.

A taxi packed with people waving flags whizzed by, down the now empty road. A girl in a pink jersey and a man, sitting

on the half-open roof, set up a long hooting screech as they passed: I felt I had sampled the patriotic enthusiasms of Piccadilly Circus. What luck! How depressed I should have been in the midst of them! There is nothing so heart-damping as being out of sympathy with a crowd.

In a road of modest villas (it was quiet and dark) I passed first one and then another waiting taxi . . . close on three o'clock, and in this region of prudent living! Suddenly behind some acacias shivering in the night air a door opened. A woman ran quickly down the steps waving back at a man who was standing in the lighted oblong, signalling and nodding agitated encouragement. In she sprang, flinging herself back with that rapid preoccupied movement which is equivalent to exclaiming, 'This is life!' This hectic communal excitement, which overlay gloom and foreboding—my peeping idea had something to do with that—which was expressing itself here in intimate ways and elsewhere in confused uproar.

I had not come up against those blatant manifestations of it, that swaggering contempt for suffering which suggests such an ignominious combination of cowardice, stupidity, and cruelty. Clearly the great majority (unless they feared too much for themselves or those nearest them) loved war. There was exhilaration abroad to-night, but beneath lay forebodings of dreadful days, and deeper still a dumb resentment at the cold-blooded idiocy of diplomacy. Yet, there it was—and it was a kind of happiness. Why did a declaration of war make people unusually happy? Was it only love of excitement? Where exaltation roared and romped and streamed along the streets, it seemed it might be so; but where I had surprised it, in quieter eddies, there seemed to be another element involved. I caught the idea which had been peeping at me, and the irony of it was enough to make one cry: few people experience so genuinely that sense that life is worth living, which a feeling of brotherhood gives, as when they are banded together to

kill their fellow-men; they are never so conscious of the humanity of others as when they are out, sharing risks, to smash the self-respect and mutilate the bodies of those who, but for a few politicians, might just as easily have been hoping with them, dying with them side by side.

Earlier in the night I had seen a party of French recruits doubling through the streets, singing. Everybody had hailed them as they went by. Coming towards me now under the lamps was a man in spectacles, with a small straw hat perched on his big square head. He looked Teutonic. 'Gute Nacht,' I said, as we passed. He stopped for a second and wrung his hands: 'Ach Gott, Ach Gott! Mein lieber Freund!'

## WHAT IS SUCCESS?

BY DEAN INGE

From *Nash's Magazine*, March, 1928.

*It was not until his middle age that Dean Inge began to write for the papers. Long before his articles in the Evening Standard began to appear he had a wide academic distinction as a philosopher with a rare literary style. Hilaire Belloc has, indeed, declared that Dr. Inge is one of the most distinguished writers of English now living. Dr. Inge is a man whose realities are not very easy to discover, but he is, without question, one of the half-dozen outstanding personalities of the Church of England. He is a man who always says what he thinks, and always says it with distinction.*

THE word 'Success' is written on the heart of every good American, and floats as an ideal before the minds of most young Englishmen. 'Be Christians and you will be successful,' exclaimed the Principal of an American University to his students. It does not sound quite like the Beatitudes, but I dare-

say it helped the young men who heard it to live cleanly, to shun smuggled wood-alcohol, to work hard and render efficient 'social service.' There are many young people who are the better for being told that success is within their reach. Nothing distresses an English College tutor more than to see the young man with *two* talents preparing his napkin to hide them in. Ambition may be the last infirmity of noble minds; but it is a splendid spur for the average man. This is why the Americans deliberately try to engender the *superiority* complex. The subject of it is sometimes a rather intolerable person; but he is ostentatiously happy, and he gets things done.

But what is success? We know what Samuel Smiles meant by it. The good apprentice comes up to London with half a crown in his pocket. By unremitting attention to his humble duties he wins the confidence of his employer, becomes a partner, marries his employer's daughter, and dies a peer and a millionaire. This is success, tangible and incontrovertible.

A Prime Minister is also unquestionably a successful man. A judge, an archbishop, a field-marshal, a 'best-seller' is admitted to have been successful, in his own line. He would probably, most people suppose, have preferred to be a millionaire, or a Prime Minister, if he had known how to do it, but he has played his cards well. There are no doubt other ways of spending one's life, which some people find attractive. But the world does not speak of success in connection with them. Robert Browning thought that the grammarian, who spent his life over the niceties of Greek syntax, had resolved to win 'heaven's success or earth's failure,' and that he therefore exclaimed once for all, to achieve a horrible rhyme, 'Hence with life's pale lure.' I have known several grammarians; I once wrote a Latin grammar myself; and I fear they are simply creatures of habit. They have no visions of unfading crowns; they would be miserable if they were separated for a day from their desks and their books.

Most people would assent to the saying that happiness is 'our being's end and aim'; and yet, curiously enough, they do not identify Success with happiness. If they did they would have to revise their standards of Success rather drastically. It has been said that the happy man has the best of reasons for being happy, namely, the fact that he is so. That may be true; but the contented man is severely handicapped in the race of life. He who wants nothing will get nothing. Ambition is occasionally the luxury of the fortunate, but it is more often the consolation of the unhappy. Borrow in *Lavengro* would even have us believe that a tendency to mental depression may be a man's best friend. 'Thou wouldst be joyous, wouldst thou? Then be a fool. What great work was ever the result of joy, the puny one? Who have been the wise ones, the mighty ones, the conquering ones of the earth? The joyous? I believe it not.'

The biographies of the great on the whole confirm Borrow's opinion, though it may be too rhetorically expressed. We generally find that in early life they have been unhappy; not merely impecunious and driven to fight hard for their own hands, but depressed and anxious beyond what the circumstances justified. And often, though not always, they have owned that the happiest period of their lives was the time of their first struggles and quite insignificant successes. Sometimes the big victories have brought only disillusionment. They have done something, but it was not what they meant to do. Their bodily organisation, it may be, has broken down under the strain; or they have formed habits which prevent them from enjoying success, when it has come to them. We have met some successful men who seem to be happy. They have aimed at a rather low type of achievement, or after beginning with nobler ambitions, they have come to be content with the world's honours, which they have gained. But no one could maintain that the successful as a class are conspicuously happy.

Augustine Birrell, in one of the most famous of his *Obiter Dicta* essays, declares that most great men hate their greatness, because it is not of the kind which they most admire. Gray, an exquisitely finished poet and incidentally a college don, would have liked to be a successful general, but he wrote the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* and took no Quebec. Wolfe did take Quebec, and while he was doing it was heard to remark that he would rather have written Gray's *Elegy*. Carlyle, whose motto was 'Blows, not words,' sang the praise of silence in about thirty-six octavo volumes. Invalid men of letters—cripples like W. E. Henley or consumptives like Robert Louis Stevenson—let their imaginations run riot in scenes of violence and bloodshed. I think, however, that Mr. Birrell has made an amusing point rather than proved a general truth. Most great men have believed in the work of their choice, whether active or artistic or contemplative.

Putting aside the test of happiness, which clearly is no criterion, since those who have it seldom become great, and those who become great have either put happiness aside or are too busy to think whether they are happy or not, we find other troublesome questions waiting for an answer.

Why do we say, 'All's well that ends well'? Why is the end of a man's career more important than the beginning? Are we to call a man successful who has spent an extremely strenuous and uncomfortable life in the pursuit of power or place or riches, and who at last gains his object only to have the cup snatched from his lips by death, disablement, or domestic misfortune? Was St. Paul not a successful man, because he was beheaded? Or Napoleon, because he died at St. Helena? Or Raphael and Mozart, because their lives were cut short at thirty-six? Two men are in love with the same woman. One of them seizes her; the other writes a *Vita Nuova* about her. Which is the successful lover? Beatrice's husband probably found her a very ordinary young woman; Dante possessed the



ideal Beatrice, with Gemma Donati to satisfy his less spiritual needs. However we may answer this last question, the saying, 'Call no man successful before he dies,' will not work. Many men have died rather early, and some rather miserably, after putting to their credit some great achievement for which posterity owns itself in their debt.

The question of posthumous fame as an ingredient in success remains rather difficult. Rogers believed himself a great poet, and thoroughly enjoyed his reputation; he is now forgotten. If Wordsworth had died at fifty, he would have received scarcely any recognition in his lifetime; he is now secure on his pedestal. The French Millet had not enough to eat; the English Millais made £30,000 a year. Which is the more successful, the painter of *The Angelus*, or the painter of the very creditable canvases which found so ready a market?

These problems, which cannot be solved with any precision, should lead us to look for a less external standard of success than those which we have suggested while following Samuel Smiles, a prophet of whom in these socialistic days we are becoming ashamed. Success, we shall agree, is something that a man is or becomes, not something that he takes or gets. We are brought back to the old question whether it is better to be or to seem, which Socrates discusses in the first book of Plato's *Republic*. His conclusion, of course, is that it is better to be just than to be thought so, even if the pretender dies loaded with honours, and the truly just man, after suffering every kind of ill-usage is—crucified. To read that sentence, written in the fourth century before the Christian era, helps us to understand what Nietzsche meant when he said that Plato was a Christian before Christ. To be successful is to have made a right use of our life; to ask what we have got by it is irrelevant.

This new criterion will make some of Smiles's heroes, and some of the men whom Lloyd George delighted to honour,

look rather foolish. The 'self-made' man, as an American said, thereby relieves the Almighty of a very heavy responsibility. His success, on inspection, turns out to have been too dearly bought. Bacon, who was not too scrupulous himself, writes: "The rising unto Place is laborious; and by Paines men come to greater Paines; And it is sometimes Base; And by Indignities men come to Dignities. The standing is slippery, and the Regresse is either a downfall, or at least an Eclipse, which is a Melancholy Thing." The risk of a fall, however, is not the chief evil. Climbing and crawling are performed in much the same attitude.

It is astonishing how easily acts of baseness, if they are not discovered, are forgotten. The passions of youth, and the ambitions of middle age, grant dispensations more readily than the most courtly father confessor. The things that pinch the conscience of the man of the world are his miscalculations and his gaucheries, not his premeditated crookednesses. But sins that are forgotten are not therefore forgiven; they are just the sins which are not forgiven. When a man has acted meanly and profited by it, his sense of values is perverted; a double heart, as a seventeenth-century divine says, makes a double head. The whole character of the successful worldling suffers a fatty degeneration; it becomes vulgar, narrow and uninteresting. The Psalmist speaks of men to whom God gives their desire, and sends leanness withal into their souls. A lean soul in an overfed body is an unlovely spectacle, and not an unusual one.

But even if the conscience is not blunted by ignoble arts, the successful career is often an unjust and anti-social one. How large a part of success consists in choosing a line of work which by some accident is overpaid; in seizing an advantageous position, such as a temporary monopoly; in appropriating profits which cannot be said to have been earned; in tripping along unencumbered, while others have to carry the

heavy baggage! It is this kind of social injustice which rouses the indignation of the less fortunate; and we can hardly deny that this kind of success is more praised, envied and sought after than it should be. The man himself may not see that his career is open to criticism; but this crass kind of success is not good for the character. We can see that even without the warnings in the Gospels. Outside the field of commerce, very much of what the world calls success is won by adroitly annexing the credit which belongs to someone else, or which should be shared among many. Socrates's dilemma, to be or to seem, probes very deeply when we examine the foundation of what we usually consider success.

But another question suggests itself. If success consists in making the most and best of our natural gifts, how is it compatible with specialisation, and who can do anything great without specialising? We may envy the harmoniously developed man, with his numerous interests, but these are not the men to whom the world owes most. It would be delightful to be a Sir John Lubbock, keen about everything from bees to banking, or an Andrew Lang, who could write equally well on golf and on folklore, besides translating Homer. But did not even the greatest of all universal geniuses, Leonardo da Vinci, fritter away some of his unrivalled talent by trying too many things and leaving them unfinished? My view about specialising is that if the object be mean, selfish or unworthy, the success won by concentration has to be paid for, and at a high price. The character is warped, cramped and stunted. But when a man deliberately resolves to limit himself for the sake of some worthy task to which he conceives himself to be specially called, the sacrifice is not so great as it appears to be, nor so great as he was willing to make it. The eternal values, Goodness, Truth and Beauty, overlap one another, so that by faithfully following one of them, as the saint or the scientific worker or the artist does, we do not

wholly forfeit what we might have learned from the other two. Every noble endeavour takes on a kind of universality, so that a broad mind is not much cramped by a narrow sphere. We penetrate further towards the heart of things by learning one subject thoroughly than by acquiring a smattering of many.

It is a truism that there can be no success without a unitary purpose in life. But most people have none. Men may be divided into those who have a plan for their lives, and those who have none. The plan may be a mean one—enough has been said of this; but those who have no purpose at all swell the ranks of the unsuccessful. It is less of a truism to add that for those who have an ideal it is not the attainment of the purpose that makes success. 'Everyone may win who tries, for the struggle is the prize.' Success, for the man with an ideal, is nothing external, which chance may give and chance take away. It has no definite limited achievement, which we can enjoy or forget when we have won it. It is a growing and expanding life, which because it is spiritual in its nature, stretches into infinity, far beyond our knowledge, and even beyond our desire. The beatified spirit, in the words of Plotinus, is 'always attaining and always aspiring.' Or in the more familiar words of St. Paul, 'I count not myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do; forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' There can be no boredom in such a life.

There can be no boredom; but failure is an ingredient in this kind of success. 'Our business in this world,' wrote Stevenson, 'is not to succeed, but to continue to fail in good spirits.' He suggested for his epitaph, 'Here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much,' or 'There goes another faithful failure.' Browning's development of this thought in

*Rabbi Ben Ezra* is too well known to quote. I will transcribe instead a few lines by the schoolmaster poet, T. E. Brown:

'The man that hath great griefs I pity not;  
'Tis something to be great  
In any wise, and hint the larger state,  
Though but the shadow of a shade, God wot.  
To him the sorrows are the tension-thrills  
Of that serene endeavour  
Which yields to God for ever and for ever  
The joy that is more ancient than the hills.'

Have I been too homiletic? Then let me in conclusion come back to earth, and ask what is the type of a successful life, not strictly from the religious point of view, but taking a higher and more rational standard than that of Samuel Smiles. Christ, in His encomium of John the Baptist, implied that a great prophet is the greatest of all men born of women. So be it; but the prophet is a man inspired, and the Spirit bloweth where it listeth. Next to a great religious genius, what is the most thoroughly satisfying type of success? If we are young enough to choose our line in life, how shall we set about it? First, we must choose some worthy and congenial task, the partial fulfilment of which may be within our reach. 'Blessed is he who has found his work,' says Carlyle; 'let him seek no other blessedness.' Then, we must devote ourselves to it, making our work our play, as any noble work may be and ought to be. An excellent example of a life wisely planned is that of a not wholly admirable character, Gibbon the historian. His immortal history was just within the compass of his genius; he had just time to finish it, and he finished it. But even more enviable, it seems to me, are the lives of men like Charles Darwin, Sir Francis Galton, and Pasteur. There is no finality about scientific discovery; the very greatest men, even a Newton and a Darwin, are proved in time not to be infallible. But we have argued that finality is no part of

success. The man who has advanced the frontiers of knowledge has done all that a man can do in one life.

More insecure and ephemeral are the achievements of the great 'practical' men, the men of action, like Julius Caesar, Napoleon and Bismarck. Their methods certainly, and their aims probably, are less pure than those of the scientific discoverers and men of learning. The voice of the people would place them far above the students and thinkers; but so would not I. Such men usually take out of the common stock more than they put in, and they cause a great deal of human suffering. The time may come when our perverse fellow-men will come to honour their benefactors more than their destroyers and plunderers, and will think a skilled craftsman more worthy of respect than an Emperor Napoleon, or a 'Napoleon of finance.' But this would involve such revolutionary changes in our estimates of success that I shrink from following up the subject any further.

## 'THE WATER-BUS'

By A. P. HERBERT

From *The Times*, November 16th, 1929.

*A. P. Herbert is one of Mr. Punch's brilliant young men. Perhaps he can be best described as a pugnacious humorist. His humour is to be found in Punch, his pugnacity in the correspondence column of The Times. Recently he has been writing for the theatre with a great deal of the distinction of W. S. Gilbert.*

THE traffic of London is an increasingly bad dream. The L.C.C. is desperately building or imagining bridges and roads. Mr. J. H. Thomas, with public money and credit facilities behind him, is at his wits' end to find useful work. Mr. Lans-

bury is admirably exploring the town for better and brighter 'lungs.' May we once again respectfully invite them all to cast their eyes on the River Thames and imagine the water-bus?

The River Thames flows through the heart of London, a neglected highway, a neglected beauty, a neglected 'lung,' a neglected education, a neglected field of employment, a neglected source of revenue. No man has seen London till he has seen it from the river, as our fathers saw it. But rare is the Londoner who has seen it so. To most of us this unique stretch of water is as unknown as the sewers, and almost as unapproachable. Why? There is no good reason.

If the river were dry land it would be alive with motor-buses; and, given good will, energy, and imagination, it would be served by swift, comfortable, profitable motor-water-buses. The Londoner should be able, in any weather at any time of the year, in any part of riverside London, to enter a public boat and go to any other part, whether for business or pleasure. At present he can go upon his river only for pleasure, and that only to a limited extent in the summer months. There are those who will say that the existence of a limited service means that there is only a limited demand; that the Londoner can never be persuaded to use the river, and so on. But he has never had the chance; for there has never been an adequate service. Private enterprise does its best and would to-day be providing better services, it must be said with regret, but for the discouragement of public bodies and the excessive charges made by them for the use of their insufficient piers.

But I want to inspire, not to accuse. Let the weary strap-hanger imagine the London water-bus. It (or she) holds 300 passengers, and has every modern convenience for the tired business woman. Electric lights, and comfortable 'armed' seats on deck and in the saloon; electric stoves in the winter; the deck open or closed in according to the weather; more

room than the bus, more air than the train; refreshments, newspapers, etc., for sale on board. No noise or jerks or traffic jams. As for speed, she travels nine miles an hour *against* the tide—which is more than any tram or bus can do on the average in Central London. For every journey over two miles the water-bus is the quicker.

This attractive vessel will pick you up after the day's work at Blackfriars, at Westminster, at the Tower, at the Temple, etc., and land you anywhere between Hammersmith (or Kew?) and Woolwich. And then, Sir, on your afternoon off, you will take your family to the nearest pier, and travel easily down to the Tower, to Wapping or Limehouse, or the Surrey Docks. You will see the charming bustle of the Pool of London, the big ships stealing out to sea, the lovely sailing barges beating down, the fussy tugs, the vast cranes and warehouses, Billingsgate, the Custom House, the noble pile of Greenwich Hospital rising from the water. You will have tea or dinner at Greenwich and travel back into the setting sun. At dusk the river becomes an enchanted place, the prosy factories are mysterious and beautiful, the dull trams like fairy coaches float along the Embankment; the lights on the shore, the shadow and sparkle on the water, the fresh bite in the air—here is suddenly a different world, a new London, which the Londoner never sees.

Now, five years ago Sir Samuel Instone put forward a scheme for a service such as has been described, which was at last rejected, rightly or wrongly, by the L.C.C. They were not asked to risk much, but they would not risk anything. They were not satisfied that the service would 'pay.' But their prognostications were founded on the experience of their own slow, dirty, unpunctual paddle-steamers of 1905-1908—a very different kind of craft from what is now proposed, operated under different conditions and to meet a different need. In those days the 'traffic problem' scarcely existed; the population



of London was not much more than half what it is now, and the modern internal combustion engine was not available. The paddle-boats were run by steam, with smoke and smuts; they were not well fitted or attractive; they had not shallow draught, and were continually aground in the upper reaches of the river; they were large and difficult to handle, and could not develop their full speed on account of wash. The evidence of the paddle-steamers is no evidence. One might as well express doubts about a new electric Tube on the ground that Stephenson's 'Rocket' was unsatisfactory.

Sir Samuel Instone's scheme was rejected five years ago. To-day the traffic congestion is worse, and unemployment is no better; but the river still flows through the town, a highway ready-made, needing no maintenance or repair—only 25 bus stops. The building and manning of the boats and piers would provide employment—nothing much, perhaps, but something. May we not plead with the County Council to look out of their fine building and consider the river again? No one will blame them for keeping a careful eye on the ratepayers' money. Let us even say that perhaps in their wisdom they were right at the time to reject the Instone scheme. But five years have passed. Will they not at least reopen the matter—invite Sir Samuel to meet them again, invite competitive tenders from other quarters, or put up a scheme of their own?

It is really a question of civic pride—is this wealthy city making full use of her natural resources for the free movement and welfare of her citizens? We are spending £1,000,000 on the reconditioning of Waterloo Bridge and £12,500,000 on the new Charing Cross Bridge. We do not ask if they 'pay.' The cost of the twelve new piers which the Council were asked to provide was £40,000 only, and under the Instone proposals it was estimated that if the service were only reasonably successful—*i.e.* if no more than 5,000,000 passengers were

carried annually—the Council would recover their expenditure and make an annual profit.

At least let no one tell us that the Londoner ‘does not want’ the water-bus. There was not much evidence that he wanted the Tubes or the wireless before he got them; and it would be a strange thing if the capital of the island race had an invincible repugnance to travel by water.

## IN THE LAND OF THE SOVIETS

BY HARRY SACHER

From the *Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 4th, 1930

*Harry Sacher came from New College to the staff of the Manchester Guardian. He was called to the Bar, practised for some time in Palestine after the Mandate had been accepted by Great Britain, and is now one of the most distinguished of the Zionist leaders. He returned to journalism recently to write a series of brilliant articles on Soviet Russia for the Guardian, of which the following is the last.*

FOREIGN visitors to Russia are conscious of a pervading atmosphere of constraint. It is there although there is no special display of military or police and no very obvious exercise of supervision, and although people go about their daily tasks much as in other lands and reveal the qualities and affections common to humanity. Many causes go to generate it: the ceaseless propaganda, the submission to direction from above, the eternal proclamation of difference and superior virtue, the isolation, the brooding weight of authority. Here is a State resolutely determined to reshape society and the individual according to a preconceived pattern, and woe to the individual who obstructs or resists. Alien influences must be excluded, and every influence favourable to the designed end

must be brought to bear. Man is nothing, the State is everything. For all the tremendous explosion of force and energy, the air has the heaviness and the monotony and the drabness of a seminary.

The Russian mind has very little contact with the foreign mind. Only rarely is the Russian allowed to travel, and the foreign book or newspaper as rarely crosses the frontier. In the heavily stocked bookshops the only foreign books I saw were a few technical works, and on the newspaper stands England was represented by the *Daily Worker* and Germany by *Die Rote Fabne* and a casual copy of the *Berliner Tageblatt*. Foreign news is wholly State-purveyed. The whole press is under Communist control and preaches from the same prescribed texts. There is no freedom of expression, or meeting, or organisation. Criticism can at most be directed to the detail of the working of the ordained scheme, not to the scheme itself or its principles. Orthodoxy and regimentation are the watchwords. Repression by itself would be only half an evil. The individual must not only not be his own spontaneous self; he must conform to the official type.

#### THE COMMUNIST RELIGION

What is that type? It is for both peasant and worker the master—or the slave?—of the machine. It is the man most capable of achieving mass production of material commodities meet for a society where everybody shall be so far as possible like everybody else. America is the exemplar and the inspiration. Education works to the same end. The humanities are out of favour. Those studies which lead most directly to practical results rally the students and the subsidies. This is all so unlike the natural Russian, who is introspective, disorderly, and visionary, that the Soviet Government may be imagined to be pursuing only a proper corrective of a dis-

abling bias; but their own positive philosophy is too manifest. Much, and much that is not strictly true, has been written about the Bolshevik attitude toward conventional religion. It is hostile, but only in a qualified degree persecuting. It does not prohibit worship, but it preaches against it and penalises it. A practising Christian or Jew will not be admitted to the Communist party and stands a fair chance of losing his job. But Communism is itself propagated as something hardly distinguishable from a religion. From the crèche to the university the Russian is being taught that Marxism is the pathway to all truth and the key to salvation. The pale, thin liquor of abstract doctrine is fortified by the rich, sanguine injection of personality. Already Communism is achieving its divinities and developing its hagiology and its theology. It has its trinity—Marx, Communist God the Father; Lenin, Communist God the Son; and the evanescent Engels, Communist God the Holy Ghost. Every city must have its statue of Marx, and not a shop, office, ship, or city can forgo its pictorial or plastic representation of Lenin. The tangled bush of Marx's beard will take on the Olympian curls of Jupiter, and already the Lenin of the cloth cap, the shapeless trousers, the fiery gesture is evolving into the stylised sanctified. In her funeral speech Lenin's widow said: 'During these days when I stood beside the coffin of Vladimir Ilyitch [Lenin] I thought over his whole life, and now I will tell you this—his heart beat in passionate love for everybody that is oppressed. He himself never said it, and I perhaps would not have said it on a less auspicious occasion.' The young Communist is commanded 'every day and every hour to meditate how to fulfil the commands of Lenin, and by his life and his work within and without the Order to justify that name.' There is the legend of love and redemption visibly taking shape and the divine authority being proclaimed. In a stately mansion in Moscow professor-priests devote their lives to the collection, study and inter-

pretation of every word of Marx; the Communist canon law is in the making.

Orthodoxy, political and Marxian orthodoxy, is one of the tests of fitness to study and to teach as well as to rule. The metaphysician, the historian, the economist, the chemist, the physicist, even the physician must relate his science to Marxian philosophy, as in the Middle Ages to the doctrine of the Church. The tenure of an academic chair hangs precariously on the approval of student and politician. The systematic depression of the 'intelligentsia' and elevation of the worker in the field of learning as elsewhere and the diversion of science to the supreme purpose of material realisation are inadequately compensated by the proliferation of well-endowed institutes of learning. The note of the Russian educated mind used to be catholicity, boldness, and freedom. It is difficult to resist the belief that under Bolshevism it is being narrowed, crippled, barbarised. Of course, judgment depends upon the point of view and the standard of values. Communism rejects and despises the Liberal measure, it asserts that it is merely a reflection of capitalism, and it pronounces good and evil what that declares evil and good.

#### THE THEOCRACY

What is the Government which thus enforces its will on Russia? Its starting-point is the class war. Others than workers and peasants have no place in Communist society. They must be excluded from education, administration, and labour. There is a story, probably true, that a writer submitted a play on the theme 'Communism after 500 years,' which was rejected by the censor because the class war did not appear in it. For worker, used in the large sense, and peasant society exists. There is a parade of democracy and elections, and the life of the worker is passed in a round of meetings. But behind the

transparent veil all is directed by the Communist party, and the higher and more authoritative the Soviet the more assured is the Communist majority. The Communist party is a sort of Communist Jesuit Order, numbering, with those who are still but candidates, some 2,000,000. It is carefully selected and sifted, and subject to periodic purges. The children and youths are drilled in Young Communist organisations; the chosen become in due course probationers, and only the elect of the probationers full members. A member owes implicit obedience to the party; whatever it commands he must carry out; whatever it decides is law. Within the party a small group, now symbolised by Stalin, is supreme. It is an oligarchy exercising autocratic power, tempered by the necessity to keep its ear to the ground in order to know the limit beyond which it is prudent not to pass. Trotsky denounces the 'bureaucratic' character of the present regime, and demands its 'democratisation,' words difficult of precise definition. His grievance is that since the passing of Lenin the machine has conquered and the priests have taken the place of the prophets. That is true. The heroic age is over and that of organisation and institutionalising come. The romantic flavour is fading and pedantry is creeping in, but there is an increase of efficiency and assuredly no slackening of will. The Soviet Government is vastly more than terror, but terror is one of its instruments. The foreigner is under observation, and it is dangerous for any Russian to have much intercourse with him. It is difficult to get a Russian to speak freely, and the fear and denial of liberty make the most painful impression.

Soviet authority is firmly based. It is not threatened either by internal divisions among the ruling oligarchy or by the collapse of its economic system or by popular discontent or by foreign aggression. The Trotsky heresy has been extirpated and no little of his teaching adopted. The Socialist system seems to be past its heaviest strain. The vast majority of

Russians have never known freedom, and neither miss nor prize it. No conceivable alternative Government could better their present status, and most would imperil it. The minority are impotent. Communism, though it uses terror, does not rest on terror, and what it offers or promises has for most Russians more attraction than what it denies. Officially Russia professes a real fear of possible attack by Poland and Rumania, supported by France, but it is difficult to accept these professions as sincerer than the assertion that the Soviet Government has no control over and no responsibility for the propaganda of the Comintern. Moscow feels its isolation and its practical exclusion from the comity of nations. These things add to the instability of the world, but do not endanger peace. With less dogmatism and more common sense on both sides, they could be adjusted. The insistent question is whether Soviet Russia, assuming the permanence of its Socialism, holds out the promise of evolving into a system of government less disdainful of individuality and liberty. It is difficult to be optimistic.

## POETRY





## AN ELEGY

BY IAN COLVIN

From the *Morning Post*, March 13th, 1917

AH, not unfortunate, to find thy rest  
Somewhere upon the trackless Ocean's breast,  
For ever undisturbed by praise or blame,  
Though ghouls exhume the casket of thy fame,  
Though politicians thy dead laurels take  
And of the withered leaves an apron make!

In life to work, clear-eyed and undismayed,  
For all that these same vermin had betrayed,  
Khartum, Majuba, blots on England's shield,  
To scour them bright upon the stricken field,  
For all their blunders and for all their lies,  
Thy task to make the bloody sacrifice.

Such was thy work, and when the arduous crest  
Of years and victories seemed to promise rest,  
To thee once more the politicians came  
And sought the grateful shelter of thy name,  
Threw all their liabilities on thee—  
The liquidator of Democracy!

Duties undone; and debts with phrases paid,  
On thee, their scapegoat, was the burden laid  
By politicians suddenly afraid—  
Even in the smoke of war to improvise  
Armies, munitions, rifles, and supplies,  
To base thy plans on orders unfulfilled

And sow thy dragon's teeth on ground untilled—  
A task which it were martyrdom to choose  
And all but fools or heroes would refuse.

And now that work is done and thou art dead  
And England saved by thee when all is said,  
Must thou still pay the balance owed to Fate  
For gambles that they called legitimate?  
Alas, poor Kitchener, thy fame decried,  
Who lived for England and for England died,  
Lived without ease and died without a grave,  
In life a desert and in death a wave,  
Fear not, no stone, nor name, nor mound, nor track,  
The kindly seas will never give thee back,  
Thy body may at least secure repose  
Since where it lies not even Winston knows.

## MY BLACKBIRD

BY CLAUDE BURTON

From the *Morning Post*

*Claude Burton began to write his daily poems in the Evening News over thirty years ago, and went on writing them until long after the war. Now his verse appears in the Morning Post. The average of excellence that he attains is something like a miracle.*

WHEN the sky at dawn grows pearly  
And from off the dew-drenched lawn  
Not as yet the late and early  
Worm has tactfully withdrawn,  
After first low twitterings  
Soft and sweet my blackbird sings.

Not too loudly he upraises  
That delicious voice in song.  
Thoughtfully he tries his phrases,  
Striving as he goes along  
To amend them that he may  
Use them later in the day.

Though his song may never finish,  
At its beauty I could weep,  
And its charm does not diminish  
Though it rouses me from sleep.  
Who to anger could confess  
Waked with such sweet gentleness?

When his practice notes are over  
Then my chorister takes wing.  
Here and there, a careless rover,  
Far away I hear him sing  
Till I sink into a deep  
Comforted and dreamless sleep.

## LOVERS

BY T. W. H. CROSLAND

From the *Morning Post*, April 30th, 1916

*The late T. W. H. Crosland was one of the most tragic figures whom I have ever known—a man of great parts, a poet of distinction, a critic of wide reading and sound judgment, a man of tremendous courage and capable of Quixotic friendship, always quarrelling, always fighting, nearly always miserably poor, reckless and heroic, exciting both pity and admiration.*

HE goeth and he returns not. He is dead.

    Their house of joy no further brightness shows,

    Their loveliness is come unto its close,

Their last touch given, and their last kindness said.

For him no more the vision of her bent head;

    For her no more the lily or the rose,

    Nor any gladness in this place of woes;

The book is shut, the bitter lesson read.

Yet who shall beat them down? Though the Abhorred

    Taket the groom, and to the bride hath sent

    The dagger of anguish with the ice-cold hilt,

Both of them triumph in a strange content—

    And out of souls like these will heavens be built

And holy cities peopled for the Lord.

BETTER THAN A PLAY

BY SIR OWEN SEAMAN

From *Punch*, July 9th, 1913

*Sir Owen Seaman is Punch. Humorous but not effervescent, understanding but not over-sympathetic, at once English and entertaining.*

(Lines addressed to a waiter at a restaurant where they offer facilities for theatre-dinners.)

NAY, rush me not, Antonio; let me savour  
This coffee *à la Turque* at my slow ease,  
And lap this blend of Benedictine flavour  
Distilled by holy friars on their knees;  
Bring me a brand of Cuba, green and balmy,  
With gilded cummerbund and long and fat;  
I have no play to see to-night, *mon ami*;  
I thank my gods for that.

This hour to inward peace is dedicated;  
To-night I will escape that captious mood  
Which comes of healthy appetite unsated  
Or else the bitter pangs of bolted food;  
Lingering meals, with choice cigars for sequel,  
Suit my digestive system better far;  
I have seen many plays, but few to equal  
A really good cigar.

And then compare the charges! For a scanty  
Stall I must put my 12/6 down,  
Whereas this full and generous 'Elegante'  
Costs me the paltry sum of half-a-crown;

And, as I smoke it, I may hold a quiet  
Duologue with myself, of fancy wrought,  
Where no intruding mummers, making riot,  
Distract my train of thought.

It is, I own, an honourable calling,  
That of the histrion; I respect his art;  
The grind, I always think, must be appalling  
Of getting such a lot of words by heart;  
I would not seem, for worlds, to cast suspicion  
Upon his shining claims; I but protest  
He cannot stand the strain of competition  
With one of Cuba's best.

But, when the ferment of my peptic juices  
Begins, my good Antonio, to abate,  
Letting my brain, now blind to Thespian uses,  
Enter upon a more receptive state,  
Lest you should deem that I have touched too lightly  
On sacred matters, I will move along  
To where they give two exhibitions nightly,  
And hear a comic song.

## TO JULIA, IN ENVY OF HER TOUGHNESS

BY SIR OWEN SEAMAN

From *Punch*, Dec. 9th, 1925

WHEN I, in such revolting weather  
As permeates the Arctic zone,  
Just keep my soul and flesh together  
By wearing things that weigh a stone,

And find that you go undefeated  
In clothes that let the blast blow through,  
I marvel why my sex is treated  
As much the tougher of the two.

When Earth is wrapt in frosty vapour  
And barren boughs with snow are fledged,  
Your callous legs still love to caper  
In summer hose of silk (alleged);  
While I, if thus I mocked the blizzard  
Or rashly dared the bitter rime—  
I should be stricken in the gizzard,  
I should be dead in three days' time.

Having survived the day's exposure  
At eve you bare your hardy spine,  
Marking that exhibition's closure  
At well below the old waist-line;  
This seems to cause your lungs no trouble,  
Yet if I danced *sans* shirt and vest  
I should incur pneumonia (double)  
And in a week or so go West.

How comes it you enjoy a measure  
Of nudity to me denied?  
Is it because your frame, my treasure,  
Is coated with a coarser hide?  
I fear you'll deem this view abhorrent,  
So let me add, to break the blow,  
You are—and will remain, I warrant—  
*The nicest pachyderm I know.*



## THE BALLAD OF JOHN WELLMAN

BY E. V. KNOX

From *Punch*, December 1st, 1926.

*E. V. Knox is the brother of Fr. Ronald Knox who is a Roman Catholic secular priest, and Fr. Wilfred Knox who is a member of an Anglican religious community. They are the sons of Bishop Knox, one of the most trusted of Evangelical leaders. E. V. Knox has been for many years one of the literary lights of Punch.*

(Sir William Arbuthnot Lane, voicing the view of the New Health Society, has recently pointed out to the English-speaking world that an efficient substitute for exercise may be found in 'rolling the abdominal wall.')

I HA' lived the life of a hermit,  
 I ha' worn hygienic boots;  
 I ha' dined, with a doctor's permit,  
 On apples and nuts and roots;  
*I ha' taken pills, I ha' toiled up hills,*  
*But this is the last of all—*  
*The deed by stealth that I do for my health*  
*When I roll the abdominal wall!*

Or ever the winter woollies  
 Fit tight to the tub-like form,  
 Ye may work with a pair of pulleys,  
 Ye may punch till the pelt grows warm;  
 Ye may squat on the hams till the knee-joint jams,  
 With the song of the lark you may rise,  
 But unless you ha' ta'en Arbuthnot Lane  
 Ye know not the way of the wise.

Who has called for the unfired fodder  
That Nebuchadnezzar had?  
Who has danced, a weary plodder,  
All day for a health-fiend's fad?  
He hath found small joy for his soul's annoy,  
And little reward have they  
Who blush like a rose beneath their clo'es  
From the ultra-violet ray.

To the lean lone man his tropics,  
To the wasp the wall-hung peach,  
The Press-men chivvy their topics,  
The club-men follow their leech;  
*They have learnt this thing as the club-doors swing,  
And this thing over all,  
To wriggle their thews as they read and muse,  
And to roll the abdominal wall!*

By the cream o' the milk we curdle,  
By the yam and the yourt and the yeast,  
By the half of the globe we girdle  
As the flag flies west and east;  
Where sounds the moo of the distant gnu  
And the bison pops from the mud  
We have foughten the fight of our appetite,  
But the end thereof is a dud.

The men of the race of Ammon  
Have welted the squash-ball round,  
And a wondrous god is Mammon,  
The god of the horse and hound;  
But never the path of the Turkish bath  
Nor the lifted tan of the Row  
Shall make you well as the way I tell,  
The way that the wise ones know.

For the salt tides swing to ocean  
 And the great whales gambol west,  
 But no man has seen the motion  
 That moveth my undervest;  
*I sit in my chair and I speak you fair,*  
*But the muscles arise and fall,*  
*And the good that I win goes on within*  
*As I roll the abdominal wall!*

## THE BROOK

(20TH CENTURY)

BY J. C. SQUIRE

From the *Pure Rivers Society Annual*, 1929

I RAN from haunts of coot and tern  
 Past field and farmhouse wall that  
 I viewed with joyous unconcern—  
 But now 'Goodbye to All That'!

I cannot bicker now, although  
 I've tried my best to bicker:  
 It's all that I can do to flow,  
 A sluggish, oily liquor.

I do not chatter any more.  
 How could my waters chatter,  
 Crawling along 'twixt shore and shore  
 Chock-full of morbid matter?

My poor old friend, Lord Tennyson,  
 Did not foresee my dull fate  
 When giving me his benison—  
 Ammonial Thiosulphate!

Where once by Philip's farm I flowed,  
Full byre and bursting granary,  
I'm now obliged to take my road  
Past Mr. Cowhyde's tannery.

Another bend, another reach  
(The fish are getting fewer)  
And after that (forgive my speech)  
I'm but a common sewer.

Black is the very face of me;  
The stoutest drayman blanches  
To meet my staggering company  
Of *ne plus ultra* stench—

'Tis Cellulose, 'tis Cellulose,  
Within whose shrine there flickers,  
The rainbow sheen of countless hose  
And camisoles and knickers.

Now, mark me well, I do not say  
These things are unattractive,  
But need you make them in a way  
So really putrefactive?

Where yellow-iris-sprinkled sedge,  
Forget-me-not and cowslip  
And loose-strife once adorned my edge  
The traveller's footsteps now slip

On beds of glistening chemic slime  
To every sense appalling;  
Poor wretch, it takes him all his time  
To keep himself from falling.

*Fleet Street*

And that sweet spring-born element  
Fair punters used to pole in  
Spreads far and wide the mingled scent  
Of Phenol and Kaolin;

And Solanin and Saponin,  
Resorcin, Phloroglucin,  
And Phenanthrene and Acridine  
Combine to play the deuce in

Waters once bright as sparkling wine  
And clear as any crystal,  
That now are murkier than the Tyne  
Or Avon (below Bristol)!

. . . . .  
I watched them come and go, the men  
('T' thought me rather knowing)  
But Sulphuretted Hydrogen! . . .  
Men now are only going.

Stunk out, they stand along the bank,  
The vacant residences,  
Nettles and docks and grasses rank  
O'er top the broken fences;

The stifled orchards yield no fruit,  
And hanger, copse and holt are  
Withered and blasted at the root—  
"Attributed to coal-tar."

No more on any moonlight night  
I smile to see the glimmer  
That used, above my wave, to light  
The shoulder of a swimmer.

The dinghies never now put out  
For fishing or for sailing—  
With here and there a poisoned trout,  
And here and there a grayling;

The food the fish were wont to eat  
Has now a thorough coating  
Of china-clay and sugar-beet  
With surface creosoting. . . .

What being, not a monster, could  
Forbear to let a sigh fly  
For those old days when anglers stood  
With wet fly and with dry fly,

Where all's now filthy to the view,  
Disgusting to the nostril?  
No doubt, in general, this is true . . .  
But you should hear the boss trill,

(Like jocund young Sir Lancelot,  
Who carolled 'Tirra Lirra,'  
What time the Lady of Shalott  
Observed him in the mirror.)

He laughs to see the natives hike,  
He cries: 'Why, let 'em write all  
The letters that they damn well like  
To Westminster and Whitehall

'Or drag along the river's brim  
A Government Inspector—  
Just give me half-an-hour with him  
He'll swear the stuff is nectar.'

O, can you wonder that I yearn,  
Poor, miserable river,  
To turn and scoot to coot and tern,  
And then dry up for ever?

## EPITAPH

BY MAURICE BARING

From the *London Mercury*, July, 1920

*Major Maurice Baring has had a varied and adventurous career. After Eton and Cambridge, he entered the diplomatic service, was attached to the Embassies in Paris, Copenhagen and Rome, and then resigned to become a special correspondent, sometimes for the Morning Post and sometimes for The Times in Manchuria, Russia and the Balkans. He served during the Great War, receiving the Legion of Honour among other decorations. His writing covers a wide range, for Maurice Baring is a very wide man with a very wide knowledge of books, and a still wider knowledge of his fellow-creatures.*

HERE murdered by the frenzied, not the free,  
Lies the last monarch of a star-crossed line;  
Anointed Emperor by right divine,  
From Arctic icefields to the Aral Sea,

From Warsaw to the walls of Tartary.  
His country's travail claimed a high design;  
Too stubborn to respond, he shrank supine  
Before the large demand of destiny.

Bereft of crown, and throne, and hearth, and name,  
Grief lent him majesty, and suffering  
Gave him a more than regal diadem.

His people kissed the desecrated hem  
Of robes not now of splendour but of shame,  
And waited for the rising of the King.

LANGHAM MILL, 1925

BY LORD DARLING

From the *Sunday Times*, Aug. 2nd, 1925

*Lord Darling was for years the wittiest of His Majesty's judges. Since he has retired from the Bench he has cultivated a pretty talent for writing poems in the Sunday Times and The Times.*

THE mill stands silent, stayed; the wheel decays,  
Moss-grown, while underneath the stream yet slides  
    With idle lapse and sad,  
    By woven weeds restrained.

No busy clack now echoes from within,  
Nor sound of grinding stone; no silver dust  
    Dances athwart the beam  
    Of Autumn's sinking sun.

'Neath downward trending crow-foot, anchored leaf,  
The painted perch, mailed pike, and stagnant tench  
    Poise 'mid the oozy pool,  
    In darkened dull content.

Distant the days when I would watch my float  
Drawn 'neath the gliding boat, while wavelets lapped  
    About my feet, delayed  
    In fear a bite to lose.



Oft would I stay to watch the towing horse  
Pause till the rope fell slack, then rear and leap  
    The bar across his path  
    That balked the timid kine.

No laden barge brings bags of garnered gold—  
Reward of tilth in age-long laboured fields—  
    Nor bears away the grist  
    Contented ploughmen share.

Leaned o'er the fence, I miss the flood that ran,  
Whitened to foam, and flecked the bordering flags;  
    There mourn the winding Stour  
    Of bounteous life bereft.

Laborious stream, erst by thy strife made bright,  
Idlesse becomes not thee, nor mill, nor man—  
    Wake, then, from what thou art;  
    Be as I knew thee young.











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